ARMINIAN

INCONSISTENCIES AND ERRORS;

IN WHICH IT IS SHOWN THAT ALL THE

DISTINCTIVE DOCTRINES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CONFESSION OF FAITH

ARE TAUGHT BY

STANDARD WRITERS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

BY THE

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PREFACE.

A PREFACE to a book is almost universal. As in a discourse, so in the beginning of a book, it is proper to state the design of an author. This, in the present instance, however, is expressed so fully by the title, and in the first chapter, that such a preface is unnecessary.

The substance of what is here published, appeared originally in a series of numbers, in the *Watchman and Observer*, a religious newspaper of Richmond, Va. During the progress of the publication, repeated flattering notices of the effort were given, sometimes through the press, sometimes verbally, and sometimes by private letters; and, at the close, the request that it should be put into a more permanent form, was so extensive that the author did not feel at liberty to decline it. He has therefore revised, and somewhat enlarged the original.

Some apology for defects may be found in the fact,

that he has prosecuted the work for the greater part of the time, under much debility, and amid the labours of a pastoral charge so extensive, that he was necessarily from home four days out of each week on an average, for more than eight months of the year.

In quoting authorities, he has taken great pains to quote accurately; but notwithstanding the Arminian authorities from which most of the quotations are taken are very common, yet as the different editions are not uniform in size and type, the same pages of the different editions of the same works have not the same matter. This is true especially of Fisk's "Calvinistic Controversy," "Watson's Theological Institutes," and the "Works of Wesley." The last, indeed, have not always the same quantity of matter. The reader, therefore, who may desire to examine the quotations, may not always readily find them. As the "Calvinistic Controversy" consists of a sermon and fifteen numbers, it is to these the references are made, instead of the page. The edition of the Works of Wesley he quotes (unless otherwise noticed,) was published in 1831.

All the Arminian authorities to which reference is made, have been published by order of the General Conference for the Methodist Episcopal Church, except the following, viz.

"Southey's Life of Wesley," "Marriage Dinner,"

and the "Reply of the Rev. N. L. Bangs to Haskel."

The following, though not published by order of the General Conference, have been endorsed by the organs of the Methodist Church generally, viz.

"Porter's Compendium of Methodism," and "Foster's Objections to Calvinism."

The "Sermons of Bishop Morris" are "published for the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the Book Concern in Cincinnati." "Whitehead's Life of Wesley" was "written at the request of Mr. Wesley's executors." The following extract from Mr. Wesley's will, shows what was his desire on that subject, viz.

"I give all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published, as they see good.*

From the "Advertisement" to the Biography, we learn, that Dr. Whitehead was appointed by said committee to write the book. Of this biography the publisher of the American edition says in the preface, "This was the first written Life of Wesley, prepared from authentic documents, and it is the only one which can rightfully claim the merit of impartiality." The American is the edition we quote.

An edition of "Bledsoe's Theodicy" has been

* Arminian Magazine for January, 1792, page 29.

issued, recently, by the Publishing Committee of the General Conference North, with unusual commendation by the organs of that Church. "Methodism in Earnest," though an individual concern, is highly commended also.

THE AUTHOR.

ARMINIAN

INCONSISTENCIES AND ERRORS.

CHAPTER I.

THE FALL OF MAN.

THE title of this book explains the design of the author. Arminians suppose their system of theology, in a great measure, free from difficulties, and especially from such difficulties as they attach to Calvinism. The writer undertakes to show, on the contrary, that their standard authors maintain not only all the distinctive doctrines of Calvinism, as decidedly as Calvinists themselves, but that sometimes they go far beyond them: also that they are found frequently on two, or three, or four sides of the same question.

The right and propriety even, of free discussion, is admitted. The cause that will not bear it, ought to be abandoned. The works to which we shall have occasion to refer, are before the public, and therefore, are public property. Added to this, Calvinists complain that these works do them great injustice. They may therefore be considered standing enemies, and every new edition, a new assault. Moreover, large anti-Calvinistic extracts are freely circulated in the form of Tracts. Surely then, a return fire can be properly considered nothing more than fighting in a war begun.

To avoid confusion, it is proper to premise, that

whenever we shall speak of Arminians, we mean the Methodist Episcopal Church; and by Arminianism, the doctrines taught by standard writers in that Church. By Calvinism, we mean the doctrines contained in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith and Catechisms; and by Calvinists, we mean those who adopt those standards fully. If others than those here named shall be alluded to, it will appear from the connection.

It is to be regretted that Arminians have not a much more definite and extended Confession of Faith. It is due to themselves as a bond of union, and to the public generally. He who expects to find their creed in their Articles of Religion, will be disappointed; and he who goes to their standard writers, will find them in conflict, on every distinctive doctrine. Take for example, the fall of man.

That "by one man sin entered into the world"* is admitted. Could this have been prevented without infringing on human liberty? Here Arminians are at variance. Dr. Bangs says, "The power of God was unquestionably sufficient to have prevented the first man from sinning, had not infinite wisdom and goodness dictated the superior fitness of creating a free responsible agent. To say that the power of God was adequate to have prevented man, as a free agent, from sinning, is a contradiction. In what does sin consist? Is it not the voluntary transgression of the law? If so, to say that the power of God could have prevented man from sinning, without depriving him of his free agency, is to say, that man could have been a free agent, and not a free agent at the same time, which is a contradiction. God must then, to have prevented man from sinning, have deprived him of the power to sin, which would have been to destroy the peculiar characteristic of man, namely his respon-

* Rom. v. 12.

sibility. So that, to have prevented man from sinning, would have been to have divested him of that essential property of his nature, by which alone, he was capable of committing sin, I mean his free agency."*

The Rev. Richard Watson says, "We may confidently say, that God willed the contrary of Adam's offence, and used all means, consistent with his determination to give and maintain free agency to his creatures, to secure the accomplishment of his will." "He willed with perfect truth that man should not fall, although he resolved not to prevent the fall by interfering with man's freedom." (Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.) Professor Bledsoe says, "Although sin exists, we vindicate the character of God on the ground that it is an inherent impossibility to exclude all evil from a moral universe. This is the high, impregnable ground of the true Christian Theist."

"The argument assumes that a being of infinite power could prevent sin, and cause holiness to exist. It assumes that it is possible, that it implies no contradiction, to create an intelligent moral agent, and place it beyond the possibility of sinning. But this is a mistake. Almighty power itself, we say it with the most profound reverence, cannot create such a being, and place it beyond the possibility of sinning."

The opinion which maintains the opposite of this, he calls, "a weak crazy thing"—"a contradiction"—"an impossible conceit"—"a little, distorted image of human weakness." Theodicy, pp. 197, 198.

From these quotations it follows,

1. That Satan has a better knack of managing free agents than God.

* Reply to Haskel, pp. 23, 24.

2. That man and the devil are each an overmatch for the Almighty, they having power to do as they please, while he is obliged to do as he can, when he cannot do as he would. But could not God have made a Paradise without the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Could he not have excluded the tempter from Eden, or have worked in "man both to will and to do of his good pleasure?" Philip. ii. 13. Did he not, without destroying the free agency of Abimelech, withhold him from sinning against Abraham? Gen. xx. 6. Did he not, without infringing on the liberty of Esau, prevent him from killing his brother? Though the former came against the latter, at the head of four hundred men, was any one ever more conscious of freedom than he, when he ran and fell on the neck of Jacob and embraced him? Gen. xxxii. 6. Was Jehovah mistaken when he said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure?" Isa. xlvii. 10. Is it not true that "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand?"* that "what his soul desireth, even that he doeth,"† and that "he hath done whatsoever he pleased?" Psalm cxv. 3.

But if God cannot govern free agents on earth without destroying their free agency, can he govern them anywhere else? Is there then the least security that he may not yet be stript of all his dominions? The Calvinistic and scriptural view of Dr. Adam Clarke, Messrs. Wesley and Watson, though arrayed against the Arminianism of Watson, Bledsoe and Bangs, should set it aside. "All power," says Dr. A. Clarke, "must emanate from God; hence sin and Satan can neither exist nor act except as he wills, or permits." (Clarke's Theology, p. 80.) "Though all hell should

* Dan. iv. 35. † Job xxxiii. 13.

join together to hinder the accomplishment of the Most High, it should be in vain. . . Such is his potency, that it can do all things that do not imply absurdity and contradiction. It can do anything, in any way it pleases, and when it pleases; and it will do anything that is necessary to be done, which ought to be done." *Ibid.* p. 71. Mr. Wesley asks, "Was it not easy for the Almighty to have prevented the fall? He certainly did foresee the whole, . . and it was undoubtedly in his power to have prevented it, for he hath all power in heaven and on earth. But it was known to him, at the same time, that it was best on the whole, not to prevent it."*

The Rev. Richard Watson says, "By the aid of Revelation, we are assured that benevolence is so absolutely the motive and end of Divine Providence, that thus to dispose of man (viz. place him in a state of trial on earth) and consequently permit his voluntary fall, is consistent with (the divine goodness.) But in what manner it is so, is involved in obscurity. But the fact being established, we may well be content to wait for the development of the great process, which shall justify the ways of God to man, without indulging in speculations, which, for want of all the facts of the case before us, must always be to a great extent without foundation, and may even seriously mislead. This we know, that the entrance of sin into the world has given occasion for the tenderest display of the divine goodness, in the gift of the great Restorer, and opened to all who avail themselves of the blessing, the gate to glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life."†

Such sentiments are,

1. Scriptural. According to Arminianism, man and devils reign, and do their pleasure among the

* Sermon on God's love to fallen man.

† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. vi.

inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay their hands." But according to these sentiments "The Lord reigneth" * * * and though "clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." Psalm xcvii. 2. "Whatsoever he pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the sea, and in all deep places." Psalm cxxxv. 6.

2. They are Calvinistic. The Presbyterian Confession of Faith says, Chap. vi. Sec. 1, "Our first parents being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin, God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it for his own glory."

John Knox says, "If there be anything which God did not predestinate, or appoint, then lacked he free regimen. Or if anything was ever done, or yet shall be done, in heaven, or in earth, which he might not have impeded, if so had been his godly pleasure, then, he is not omnipotent: which three properties, viz. wisdom, free regimen, and power denied to God, I pray you, what rests in the Godhead?" McCrie's Life of Knox, p. 138.

And now to crown the whole, take the following from Hymn 397 of the Methodist Hymn-book.

> "Speak to my warring passions 'Peace!'
> Say to my trembling soul 'Be still!'
> Thy power my strength, and fortress is,
> For all things serve thy sovereign will."

"All things serve thy sovereign will." Here is Calvinism to the core. We quote from the book in use before the Church was divided.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONDITION OF MAN SINCE THE FALL.

WHAT is the condition of man since the fall of our first parents? Arminians, in common with Calvinists, speak of him as being under the condemnation of the original offenders, and as exposed to the full penalty of the original offence. Arminius, as quoted by Watson, says "The whole of this (the first sin of the first man) is not peculiar to our first parents, but is common to all their posterity, who at the time when the first sin was committed were in their loins, and who afterwards descended from them in the natural mode of propagation. 'For in Adam all have sinned.'* Whatever punishment therefore, was inflicted on our first parents, has pervaded all their posterity, and still oppresses them: so that all are 'by nature the children of wrath,'† obnoxious to condemnation, and to death temporal and eternal; and lastly, are devoid of that (primeval) righteousness, and holiness. With which evils they would continue oppressed for ever, unless they were delivered by Jesus Christ." (Theol. Inst., Part II. Chap. xviii.) Mr. Wesley says, "I am fully persuaded that every man of the offspring of Adam, is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil, and that this corruption of our nature, in every person born into the world, deserves God's wrath and damnation."‡

The General Conference says "That we are all born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and that all sin deserves eternal misery, was the unanimous sense of the ancient church." After showing that this is in

* Rom. v. † Eph. ii. 31. ‡ Works, Vol. V. page 255.

accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures, they say, "It has been already proved that this original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that hereby they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation."*

Rev. R. Watson says, "The death threatened to Adam we conclude to have extended to the soul of man, as well as to the body, though not in the sense of annihilation." By an "appeal to the Scriptures" he says, "it will be seen that the opinion of those divines who include in the penalty attached to the original offence, bodily, spiritual and eternal death, stands firm on inspired testimony."†

"The next question," he says, "is whether Adam is to be considered as a mere individual, the consequences of whose misconduct terminated in himself, or whether he is to be regarded as a public man the head and representative of the human race, who, in consequence of his fall, have fallen with him, and received direct hurt and injury in the very constitution of their bodies, and the moral state of their minds." "On this point," he says, "the testimony of Scripture is so explicit that all attempts to evade it have been in vain." He then proves most conclusively by the Scriptures, that "Adam is to be regarded as the head and representative of the human race," &c.; after which he says, "The first consequence of this imputation (of his sin,) is, the death of the body, to which, all his descendants are made liable, and that on account of the sin of Adam. 'Through the offence of one many be dead.'" Rom. v. 15.

"The second consequence is death spiritual. . . . This, we have before seen, was included in the original threatening, and if Adam was a public person, a

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 246, 247, 251.
† Theol. Inst., Part II. Chap. xviii.

representative, it has passed on to his descendants, who, in their natural state, are said therefore to be 'dead in trespasses and sins.'"

"The third consequence is eternal death—separation from God, and endless banishment from his glory in a future state." *Ibid.*

Again he says, "Having established the import of the death threatened as the penalty of Adam's transgression, to include, corporal, spiritual and eternal death, and showed that the sentence included the whole of his posterity," &c. *Ibid.*

Now that the teaching of these divines, in the above quotations, is Calvinistic in the strictest sense, appears by comparing it with the following quotation from the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. "Our first parents being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. . . By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them, by ordinary generation. . . . . .

"Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal." Confession of Faith, Chap. vi.

We will show next, that Methodists contradict flatly as Pelagians, what they have here taught as Calvinists. Mr. Wesley says, "In consideration of this, that the Son of God hath tasted death for every man, God hath now reconciled the world unto himself,

not imputing to them former trespasses." (Sermon on Justification by Faith.) "That text, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous, means, By the merits of Christ, all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's sin." Works, Vol. V. page 196.

The Rev. R. Watson says, "The false assumption that the whole race were personally, and individually, in consequence of Adam's fall, absolutely liable to eternal death, is easy to be refuted, on the clearest authority of Scripture, while not a passage can be adduced, which sanctions any such doctrine.* "On no scriptural principle, is the human race liable to personal, and conscious eternal death for the sin of Adam."†

Dr. Fisk and the General Conference say, "Through the grace of the gospel, all are born free from condemnation."‡ Again they say, "The merits of the atonement are so far available for and in behalf of the whole human family, that, the guilt of depravity is not imputed to the subject of it, until by intelligent volition, he makes the guilt his own, by resisting and rejecting the grace of the gospel"—that "being by grace in a justified state, the dying infant is entitled to all the blessings of the new covenant"§—that "a remedy is provided which meets the exigencies of man's moral condition at the very commencement of his being"—that "it does this by preventing the imputation of guilt until man is capable of an intelligent survey of his moral conditon" ||—that "sin may certainly exist, when it would not be just to impute it to the sinner," &c. **

Dr. Bond, editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, says, Man is not "responsible for his ori-

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.
† Ibid.
‡ Calvinistic Controversy, the Discourse.
§ Ibid. No. xi.
|| Ibid.
** Ibid. No. xii.

ginal depravity or liable to punishment on account of his connate evil propensities, because he had no personal agency in producing it, and had no ability to prevent it"—that "all this is washed away by the great atonement, so that every child born into the world is cleansed by the blood of Christ, and in a state of acceptance with God"*

We were before told, that "the death threatened to Adam extended to the soul as well as to the body, and included in the penalty attached to the first offence, death bodily, spiritual and eternal"—that our first parents "stood before their Maker, as public persons, and as the legal representatives of their descendants," and "that the sentence (pronounced upon them) included the whole of their posterity"—that consequently "we are all born under the penalty of Adam's sin, and that all sin deserves eternal misery"—"that the whole race are obnoxious to the guilt and punishment of Adam's transgression"—"that this original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that thereby they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation."

We are now told however, that "by the merits of Christ, all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's actual sin"—that "in consideration of this, that the Son of God hath tasted death for every man, God hath reconciled the world unto himself, not imputing to them former trespasses"—that "the false assumption that the whole race were personally and individually, in consequence of Adam's fall, absolutely liable to eternal death, is easy to be refuted on the clearest authority of Scripture, while not a passage can be adduced which sanctions any such doctrine"—that "through the grace of the gospel all are born free from condemnation"—that "the merits of the atone-

* Christian Advocate and Journal for June 16th, 1853.

ment are so available for, and in behalf of the whole human family, that the guilt of depravity is not imputed to the subject of it, until by intelligent volition he makes the guilt his own, by resisting and rejecting the grace of the gospel"—that "being by grace in a justified state, the dying infant is entitled to all the promised blessings of the new covenant"—that "a remedy is provided, which meets the exigencies of man's moral condition at the very commencement of his being, by graciously preventing the imputation of guilt until man is capable of an intelligent survey of his moral condition;" and that "sin may certainly exist where it would not be just to impute it to the sinner."*

Parallel lines are not more opposite than the above statements. Of the two, the former has been shown to be Calvinistic and scriptural, but the latter Pelagian and anti-scriptural. The former is therefore true, while the latter is false. But let us see how these

*It may not be amiss, to hear what Dr. Fisk says of Pelagianism. "It has," says he, "a variety of shades, called Pelagian, Semi-pelagian &c. Its varieties however, relate to some minor modifications of the relation of the human family to Adam, natural evil, the death of the body and greater exposure to temptation. But there is a uniformity in the essential part of the theory, which is that human nature is free from guilt or sin, until it becomes guilty by intelligent voluntary exercise." (Calvinistic Controversy, No. xi.)

From this, it will be seen, that, Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Fisk, and the General Conference, were Pelagians. Dr. Fisk, it is true, immediately states his objections to Pelagianism as "in direct opposition to the Scripture doctrine of human depravity"—the "moral character of infants"—"the Scripture doctrine of regeneration," &c. Mr. Wesley however, endorses it fully: "I would not affirm," says he, "that the arch-heretic of the fifth century (as plentifully as he has been bespattered for many ages) was not one of the holiest men of that age," * * * "I verily believe the real heresy of Pelagius was neither more or less than this: The holding that Christians may by the grace of God (not without it, that I take to be a mere slander) go on to perfection; or in other words, fulfil the law of Christ." (Sermon on the Wisdom of God's counsels.)

same divines refute their own false theology. Mr. Wesley in his Review of Taylor on Original Sin, says, "If no other (than our first parents) was justly punishable, then no other was punished for that transgression. But all were punished for it with death, therefore all were justly punished for it." Again he says, "God does not look upon infants as innocent, but as involved in the guilt of Adam's sin; otherwise, death, the punishment of sin, could not be inflicted on them." Works, Vol. V pp. 526, 577.

Mr. Watson says, "It has been fully *established* that the *full* penalty of Adam's offence passed upon his posterity. A full provision to meet the case is indeed made in the gospel, but that does not affect the state in which men are born."* "As to infants, they are not born justified, and regenerate, so that to say, original sin is taken away as to infants, is not a correct view of the case."† "For there is no more reason to conclude, that those children who die in infancy, were born with a purer nature than they who live to manhood; and the fact of their being born liable to death, a part of the penalty, shows that they were born under the whole malediction."‡

This reasoning is conclusive. But while it overthrows the Pelagianism of these divines, it establishes their Calvinism.

But, says the Rev. R. Watson, "Before any issue proceeded from the first pair, they were restored to the divine favour: Had no method of forgiveness and restoration been established with respect to human offenders, the penalty of death must have been forthwith executed upon them . . and with and in them, the human race must have utterly perished."§

Dr. Fisk says, "We believe that by Adam's unnecessitated sin, he, and in him, all his posterity, became

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii. † Ibid.
‡ Ibid. § Theol. Institutes, Part II. Chap. xix.

obnoxious to the curse of the divine law. As the first man sinned personally and actively, he was personally condemned; but as his posterity had no agency or personal existence, they could only have perished seminally in him. By the promise of a Saviour however, our federal head was restored to the possibility of obtaining salvation through faith in the Redeemer, and in this restoration all the seminal generations of men were included." (Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.)

Here then we are taught, that but for the plan of salvation through Christ, our first parents, and with them, all their posterity would "have been forthwith cut off, by the infliction of death, the penalty of their sin; but that on account of that interposition, this penalty was suspended." For a complete refutation of the idea that such consequences would have followed immediately, but for that interposition, see Edwards on "Original Sin," Part II. Chap. iii. Sec. 1. As to the actual infliction of the penalty, take the following from Wesley.

Speaking of Adam after he had sinned, he says, "He lost the life of God; he was separated from him in union with whom his spiritual life consisted. The body dies when it is separated from the soul, the soul when it is separated from God. But this separation from God, Adam sustained in the day, in the hour he ate the forbidden fruit." "And in Adam all died, all human kind, all the children of men that were then in Adam's loins. The natural consequence of this is, that every one descended from him comes into the world spiritually dead, dead to God, wholly dead in sin, entirely void of the life of God, void of the image of God, of all that righteousness, and holiness, wherein Adam was created." (Sermon on the New Birth.)

CHAPTER III.

JUSTICE OF THE SENTENCE PASSED ON FALLEN MAN.

WAS it just in God, to impute the sin of our first parents, and the penalty annexed thereto, to their posterity? The General Conference says, "We are all born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and all sin deserves eternal misery"—that "this original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that hereby, they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation.*

Mr. Wesley says, "We receive whatever blessings we enjoy since the fall, from the least drop of water that cools our tongue, to the immense riches of glory in eternity, of grace, not of debt."† "It was of mere grace, of free love, and undeserved mercy in God, that he hath vouchsafed to fallen man any way of reconciliation with himself."‡

The Rev. R. Watson says, "Man having forfeited good of every kind, and even life itself, by his transgression, all that remains to him more than evil in the natural world, as well as all spiritual blessings put within his reach by the gospel, are to be considered as the fruits of the death of Christ, and ought to be gratefully acknowledged as such"—that "we enjoy nothing in our own right, and receive all at the hands of the divine mercy."§ Again he says, "The justice of this is objected to, a point which will be immediately considered, but it is now sufficient to say, that if the making the descendants of Adam liable to eternal death because of his offence

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 246, 251.
† Sermon on Justification by Faith.
‡ Sermon on the Righteousness of Faith.
§ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.

be unjust, the infliction of temporal punishment is unjust also, the duration of the punishment making no difference in the simple question of justice. If then, we only confine the hurt we receive from Adam to bodily death; if this legal result of his transgression only be imputed to us, and we are so constituted sinners as to become liable to it, we are in precisely the same difficulty as to the equity of the proceeding, as when the legal result is extended further. The only way out of this dilemma, is that adopted by Dr. Taylor, viz. to consider death, not as a punishment, but as a blessing, which involves the absurdity of making Deity threaten a benefit, as a penalty for an offence."*

Dr. Fisk and the General Conference say, "The foundation for the plan of salvation of sinners, was the goodness and unmerited love of God"—that "there was nothing in all the character and circumstances of the fallen family, except their sin, and deserved misery, that could claim the interposition of God's saving power." That "it was pure, unmerited love, that moved God to provide salvation for our world.†

Thus far all is clear, strictly Calvinistic and scriptural. Adam, the federal head and representative of his race, involved himself and his posterity by his disobedience, in the threatened ruin. "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation," Rom. v. 18. The act of the representative binds, benefits, or injures the represented equally with himself. Although the latter are guilty in no other sense than in their equal liability with the former, to suffer the consequences of his sins:‡ and

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.

† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

‡ The idea attached to the word "guilty," by the Westminster Divines, when they say the posterity of Adam are "guilty of his first sin," is, that they are liable to the penalty of that sin.

are meritorious in the sense only, of showing equally with him the blessings he procures. The American people at large share equally with their representatives in 1776, in the declaration of our independence. And they would have shared with them in the guilt—that is, in their liability to the consequences, if that declaration had proved a failure. This position is so clear, and the argument by which it is sustained so conclusive, that no one who reads it, could suppose an opposite view would be advanced by those who have advocated it. An opposite view, however, they do advance.

Thus, Mr. Wesley and the General Conference, in answer to the reply, "God might justly pass by all men," ask, "Are you sure he might? Where is it written?" and say, they "cannot find it in the word of God," and therefore reject it as "a bold, precarious assertion, utterly unsupported by holy Scripture."*

Again, when one is represented as saying, "he knows in his own conscience, God might justly have passed by him," they "deny it."†

Here we can hardly credit our own senses. They had said before, "We are all born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and all sin deserves eternal misery"—that "it was of mere grace, of free love, and undeserved mercy, that God hath vouchsafed to fallen man any way of reconciliation with himself"—that "there was nothing in all the circumstances of the fallen family, but their guilt and deserved misery, that could claim the interposition of God's saving power," so that "they receive whatsoever blessings they enjoy since the fall, from the least drop of water, that cools our tongues, to the immense riches of glory in eternity, of grace not of debt," &c. Now however, they reject all this as "bold precarious asser-

* Doctrinal Tracts pp. 26, 27. † Ibid.

tions, unsupported by Scripture," and say distinctly God was in justice bound to provide salvation for the fallen.

On the Arminian side of this question, Mr. Watson is equally sensitive. Thus, after referring to the evils that come upon the human family, in consequence of the sin of Adam, and after referring to the benefits received through Christ, he says, "In all this, it is impossible to impeach the equity of the divine proceeding, since no man suffers any loss or injury ultimately, by the sin of Adam, but by his own wilful obstinacy; the abounding grace by Christ Jesus having placed before all men upon their believing, not merely compensation for the sin of Adam, but infinitely higher blessings, both in kind and degree, than were forfeited in him. As to adults then, the objection taken from divine justice is unsupported."

He then assigns his reasons for believing that those dying in infancy are saved, and says, "The injustice alleged as implicated in the doctrine of original sin, when considered in its whole and scriptural view, entirely vanishes."*

Mr. Watson here teaches that the imputation of the sin of Adam to his posterity would be unjust, were it not for the salvation provided through Christ, and offered for their acceptance. He comes out much more boldly, however, when he treats of the doctrine of Election. "In whatever light the subject may be viewed, (he says,) no fault in any right construction, can be charged upon the persons so punished, or as we may rather say, destroyed; since punishment supposes a judicial proceeding which this shuts out. For either the reprobate are destroyed for a pure reason of sovereignty, without any reference to their sinfulness, and thus criminality is left out of consideration; or

*Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.

they are destroyed for the sin of Adam to which they were not consenting, or for personal faults resulting from a corruption of nature, which they brought into the world with them, and which God wills not to correct, and they have no power to correct themselves. Every received notion of justice is thus violated." *

This truly is very little like Mr. Watson when he says, "Man having forfeited good of every kind, and even life itself, we enjoy nothing of our own right, and receive all at the hands of the divine mercy"—that "if making the descendants of Adam liable to eternal death, because of his offence, be unjust, the infliction of temporal punishment is unjust also; the duration of the punishment making no difference in the simple question of justice"—that "if we only confine the hurt we receive from Adam to bodily death; if this legal result of his transgression only be imputed to us, and we are so constituted sinners as to become liable for it, we are in precisely the same difficulty as to the equity of the proceeding, as when the legal result is extended further," &c. When Mr. Watson wrote thus, he was for the time being a Calvinist; but having turned Arminian, he contends that it would be a violation of every received notion of justice for God to leave any of the human family without a Saviour, and without giving them such assistance as will enable them to correct the corruption of their natures. Of course then the provisions of the gospel are of debt, not of grace; of justice, not of mercy. Mercy is favour shown to the guilty, grace is favour shown to the undeserving. If then the provisions, that have been made for the fallen, are of debt and justice, Arminians have no business with the terms "grace" and "mercy" when speaking on that subject.

Observe, Mr. Watson not only admits, but asserts

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxv.

that God did impute the sin of Adam to his posterity, and that the legitimate consequences of that imputation are bodily, spiritual, and eternal death; and he proves that the sentence is just. And yet he afterwards contends, that it would be unjust if they were left to suffer these consequences. Most certainly, then, the imputation itself which exposes them to undeserved suffering, is unjust also. Nor is the difficulty at all removed by the fact, that God offers them an opportunity of salvation through Christ. An unjust act cannot be made just by another act intended to compensate for the injustice. A father might intentionally infect his children with small-pox, and then provide a remedy. But while they all suffer, half of them might be so affected by the disease as to neglect the remedy, and die. Now, it would be mockery, to say that "in all this it is impossible to impeach the equity of the proceeding, since none of them suffer ultimately by the parent's sin, but by their own wilful obstinacy, the abounding grace of the parents having placed before them all better health upon their receiving the remedy."

But we need not pursue this subject further. Watson the Calvinist gives such an overwhelming reply to Watson the Arminian, and his Arminian brethren, that we will permit him to close this chapter.

The Apostle Paul says, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Rom. v. 18. Now, says Watson, "If it were right to attach that penalty to offence, it is most certainly righteous to execute it." (Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xix.) This is conclusive. He who is not convinced by it could not be convinced by argument.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARMINIAN DOCTRINE OF DIVINE JUSTICE.

HAVING disposed of what Arminians say of the justice of God, in reference to the sentence passed upon man for his sin in Paradise, we will notice next, their very strange idea of what divine justice is. As the Rev. Richard Watson very concisely states the opinion of his brethren generally, on this subject, we will content ourselves with three quotations from him.

"We may be bold" (says he) "to affirm, that justice and equity in God, are what they are taken to be among reasonable men." Theol. Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

"By the established notions of justice and equity in human affairs, we are taught by the Scriptures themselves, to judge of the divine proceedings, in all completely stated and comprehensible cases." *Ibid.*

Again, speaking of "the scheme of predestination. as exhibited by Calvin," he says, "It is remarkable that the answers which he is compelled to give to objections, did not unfold to this great and acute man its utter contrariety to the testimony of God, and to all the established notions of equity among men." *Ibid.* Chap. xxviii.

Here then, we are taught that justice and injustice with God are what they are with men, and that "we are so to judge of them, in all completely stated and comprehensible cases." Accordingly, with this class of writers, such expressions as the following, in reference to Deity, are very common, viz. "It is manifestly contrary to his justice."* "It is surely

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

not possible for the ingenuity of man to reconcile this to any notion of just government that has ever obtained."* "It flatly contradicts, indeed utterly overthrows the Scripture account of the justice of God."† "O strange justice! What picture do you draw of the judge of all the earth."‡ "You represent God as worse than the devil, more false, more cruel, more unjust."§ "If this doctrine be true, there is neither justice nor goodness in God."‖ &c. If the reader desires to see a perfect hurricane of such expressions, he is refered to "Foster's Objections to Calvinism." That writer, after misrepresenting every distinctive doctrine of the Calvinists, assaults his own misrepresentations with as much fury as Don Quixotte did the windmill. But to return.

The Rev. R. Watson is so sensitive in reference to divine justice, that he begins to defend it, even before he comes to man. Thus, speaking of "an objection taken to the justice of the sentence pronounced on the serpent," he says, "If special pain and sufferings had been inflicted upon the serpent, there would have been a semblance of plausibility in the objection; but the serpent suffered as to liability to pain and death, no more than other animals, and was not therefore any more than another creature, a responsible offender."**

But "special pain and suffering have been inflicted on the serpent." And "as to liability to pain and death," it does "suffer more than other animals." So true is this, that an exterminating war is carried on against the whole race of snakes. Mr. Watson indeed admits this when, a little further on in the same chapter, he speaks of "the enmity and abhor-

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 32. ‡ Ibid. page 33. § Ibid. page 171.
‖ Objections to Calvinism, page 206.
** Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.

rence we have of the serpent." But if Mr. Watson is so sensitive about alleged injustice in reference to snakes, we could hardly expect him to be less so about injustice in reference to man. Accordingly, when speaking of the "innocent suffering equally with the guilty, in general calamities," he says, "The persons so suffering are but comparatively innocent, and their personal trangressions against God deserve a higher punishment than any which this life witnesses;" but "this may be overruled for merciful purposes, and a future life presents its manifold compensations."*

To this we reply, that while it is difficult to conceive how the "punishment" of being swallowed up in a "general calamity," such as an earthquake, or shipwreck, could "be overruled to merciful purposes" to the sufferers, Mr. Watson makes no allusion to infants. But these, though "innocent" as to "personal transgressions," suffer "in general calamities," in common with adults. The truth is, the case of infants presents a difficulty utterly irreconcilable with what he says of the justice of God.

Mr. Wesley appears to have been about as sensitive on this subject as Mr. Watson. Thus, speaking of darkness in believers, he says, "For God to withdraw himself from the soul, because it is his sovereign will, is inconsistent both with his justice and mercy."†

From this it would appear that some, at least, of the divine favours are of debt, not of grace; of justice, not of mercy. It is true that in another place, he speaks of men, as "poor, guilty, sinful worms, who receive whatever blessings they enjoy, from the least drop of water that cools our tongues, to the immense

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

† Sermon on "Heaviness through manifold temptations."

riches of glory in eternity, of grace, not of debt,"* but he spoke then as a Calvinist.

Again, Mr. Wesley, and the General Conference, after stating several points in which the sovereignty of God appears, say, "But in disposing of the eternal states of men, . . . it is clear that not sovereignty only but justice, mercy and truth, hold the reins."†

But do not "justice, truth and mercy, hold the reins" in disposing of the temporal states of men? The Arminian notion that they do not, is blasphemy. Dr. Fisk and the General Conference say, "As a sovereign, God has a right to make his creatures differ in these things, (spiritual advantages,) so long as he requires only as he gives; but this differs as widely from the Calvinistic idea of sovereignty, as justice from injustice, as equity from iniquity."‡

From this it appears, that filthy motes of fallen earth do sit in judgment on their Maker. John Knox has truly said, "The foundation of this their damnable error is, that in God, they acknowledge no justice except that which their foolish brain is able to comprehend."§

Against the position that "justice and equity in God, are what they are taken to be among reasonable men," we enter our protest. Abraham did not think so, or he would not, at God's command, have raised the knife to slay his son. Perhaps, if he had read Watson's Institutes, he might have thought differently. The man who, under ordinary circumstances, wilfully kills another, is a murderer. And so would he be who, under ordinary circumstances, would, (if it were possible,) bring on a plague, sink a ship, or engulph a city. God, however, in these and various ways, wilfully kills about thirty millions every year. Accord-

* Sermon on Justification by Faith.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 57.
‡ Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
§ McCrie's Life of Knox, page 138.

ing to Arminians, therefore he is the most merciless, wholesale, and criminal of all murderers. For one man to enter the dwelling of another and wilfully kill a child, would be awful wickedness. But though this is often done by God, there is a heartfelt acquiescense. "It is the Lord, let *him* do what seemeth to him good." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." "Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." It is with real pleasure therefore that we find these wild theologians turn Calvinists and teach a better theology. Mr. Wesley says, "It is true wisdom, it is a mark of a sound mind, to acquiesce in whatever God hath chosen; to say in all things, 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.'* It does not become poor sinful worms to ask God the reason of his conduct. It is not meet for us to call him in question who giveth to none account of his ways."*

"How little do we understand of his providential dealings, either with regard to nations, or families, or individuals! There are heights, and depths in all these, which our understanding can in no wise fathom. We can comprehend but a small part of his ways now, the rest we shall know hereafter."‡

Dr. Fisk and the General Conference say, "There is indeed something of mystery hanging over the providence of God, in bestowing peculiar advantages on some, and withholding them from others."§

Mr. Watson, speaking of the sovereignty of God, in the spread of the gospel, says, "We call this sovereignty * * because the reasons, whether they are reasons of judgment, or wisdom, or mercy, are

* Sermon on the Righteousness of Faith.
† Sermon on Justification by Faith.
‡ Sermon on the Imperfection of Human Knowledge.
§ Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

hidden from us, either that we have no immediate interest in them, or that they are too deep and ample for our comprehension, or because it is an important lesson for men to be taught to bow with reverent submission to his regal prerogatives." Again he says, "We cannot be judges of a nature infinite in perfection, nor of proceedings which in the unlimited range of the government of God may have connections and bearings beyond our comprehension."*

Such sentiments are not only Calvinistic, but scriptural. According to them, "God's judgments are a great deep," and "his way is in the sea," &c.† "He maketh darkness his secret place, and his pavilion round about him are dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies."‡ "He giveth not account of any of his matters,"§ and "it is his glory to conceal a thing."‖ "He is a rock, his way is perfect, for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he."** "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts,"§§ &c.

Having seen how anti-scriptural these theologians are when they speak as Arminians, and how scriptural they are when they speak as Calvinists, we will permit Job to conclude the chapter.

"Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked, and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands!" Job xxxiv. 18, 19.

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. iv. and xxvi.
† Psalm xxxvi. 6, lxxvii. 19.
‡ Psalm xviii. 11.
§ Job xxxiii. 13.
‖ Prov. xxv. 2.
** Deut. xxxii. 4.
§§ Isaiah lv. 9.

CHAPTER V.

THE SPIRITUAL DEATH WHICH MADE A PART OF THE PENALTY OF ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION.

ARE men born, and do they continue in that state of spiritual death which was induced by the fall, until regenerated by the Holy Spirit? On this point the Calvinist affirms, while the Arminian denies. For the sake of a more striking contrast, we will consider the latter first.

Mr. Wesley says, "God did not despise the work of his own hands, but being reconciled to man through the Son of his love, he in some measure, reinscribed his law on the heart of his dark sinful creature."*

The Fourth Methodist Conference in England, speaking of "the obedience and death of Christ," say, "The souls of all men receive (thereby) a capacity of spiritual life, and an actual spark thereof."†

Mr. Wesley and the General Conference "grant, it is impossible men should leap at once to the middle, much less to the highest round (of the mysterious ladder of truth);" but, they contend, that "if the foot of it is upon earth, in the very nature of things, the lowest step is within their reach. And by laying hold of it, they may go on from faith to faith, till they stand firm even, in the Christian faith, if distinguishing grace has elected them to have the Christian gospel."‡

Again they say, "We believe that in the moment Adam fell, he had no freedom of will left, but God, when of his free grace, he gave the promise of a Sa-

* Sermon on the Original Nature and Use of the Law.
† Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 135.
‡ Doctrinal Tracts, page 240.

viour to him and his posterity, graciously restored to mankind a liberty and power to accept of proffered salvation.*

Dr. Fisk says, "Even the power of the will to choose life, and the conditions of life, is a gracious power. A fallen man, without grace, could no more choose to submit to God than a fallen angel."† "The atonement, if it is not a remedy for man's extreme depravity, it is no provision for him. If it does not give a gracious power to all sinners to embrace salvation, it has accomplished nothing for the depraved reprobate."‡

From these quotations it appears, that one doctrine of the Methodist Church is, that in the moment Adam fell, he lost all spiritual light and understanding, and even his moral feeling—"had no freedom of will left"—was "utterly unsalvable." "But that when God gave the promise of a Saviour, he restored to mankind a liberty and power to accept of salvation." This then is one doctrine on this subject; take another.

The General Conference, speaking of the interposition of Christ says, "He is the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, and this light would work out the salvation of all, if not resisted. Nor is it less universal than inbred sin, being the purchase of his death, who tasted death for every man. 'For as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ shall all be made alive.' "§

Here then we have a perfect system of passive do-nothing. Before, it was "a liberty and power" only,

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 154.

† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

‡ Ibid.

§ Doctrinal Tracts, page 95. Here we have 1 Cor. xv. 22, which refers to the resurrection of the body, pressed out of its meaning to sustain an Arminian error.

"to choose life and the conditions of life," and "to accept of salvation." But now, it is "a measure of light and grace, which if not resisted would work out the salvation of all." This then is a second doctrine on this subject. We will notice a third.

We have already seen the condition into which the human family were plunged by the sin of our first parents, and the reinstatement, consequent upon the interposition of Christ, for which Arminians contend. We have seen, also, that Mr. Watson takes a different view, and proves "that the full penalty of Adam's offence past upon his posterity, and that although full provision to meet the case is made in the gospel, that does not affect the state in which we are born."

Again he says, "The true Arminian, as fully as the Calvinist, admits the doctrine of the total depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall of our first parents, . . . (and) maintains the total incapacity of unassisted human nature to produce (certain good dispositions, and occasional religious inclinations, in those who never give any evidence of their actual conversion to God) and attributes them to that divine and gracious influence which, if not resisted, would lead to conversion."*

Again he says, "There is that operation of the Spirit by which men are put into a capacity to repent when they hear the word. If that were not the case, how then should God judge the world for not believing in Christ? Wherever the gospel is preached, it is not only preached with the influences of the Spirit, but the same Spirit is given to prepare men to receive the message. And where the message is not received, there is a resistance of the Holy Ghost. This constitutes the guilt of impenitent men. 'Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.' They had

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chapter xviii.

received those gracious influences which gave them the moral power, but they would not come to him. They resisted the Spirit in their hearts—the quickening, convincing Spirit, as well as that same Spirit in the word."*

Again he says, "By the gift of Christ, and as an immediate consequence of religious doctrine, we receive the gift of conscience. . . . . Where there is no truth there is no conscience; men are asleep; in their sins they are dead, and society all around them is corrupt. Such was the state of the heathen world."†

The difference between Mr. Watson and his brethren is, that the same influence which they say is extended, through the interposition of Christ to the whole human family, he says, is limited to those who hear the gospel. This then is a third, or as we may say, a triangle of doctrines in the same Church, on the same subject. It will therefore be a relief to the reader to turn from this Arminian jargon, to the Calvinistic and scriptural view of these divines, though it makes the triangle a four-sided figure.

Mr. Wesley says, "I am fully persuaded that every man of the offspring of Adam is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil." Works, Vol. v. page 255.

The General Conference say, "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk) but it is the corruption of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually." Doctrine and Discipline, Article VII.

* Sermon on the Ascension.

† Sermon on "The unspeakable gift of Christ." Here Mr. Watson says the heathen have no conscience, while Paul says they have. See Rom. ii. 14, 15.

In these quotations we are taught that "the nature of every man is corrupted, inclined to evil, and very far gone from original righteousness." How much it is corrupted, and how far man is gone from original righteousness, we will now see.

Mr. Wesley, speaking of the effects of Adam's sin, says, "Every one born into the world, now bears the image of the devil, in pride and self-will, the image of the beast in sensual appetites and desires. This then is the foundation of the new birth, the entire corruption of our nature."*

Again, addressing the sinner, he says, "Know thyself to be a sinner, and what manner of sinner thou art. Know that corruption of thy inmost nature, whereby thou art very far gone from original righteousness, whereby the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit, through that carnal mind which is enmity against God, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Know that thou art corrupted in every power, in every faculty of thy soul; that thou art totally corrupted in every one of these, all the foundations being out of course. The eyes of thine understanding are darkened so that they cannot discern God or the things of God. The clouds of ignorance and error rest upon thee, and cover thee with the shadow of death. Thou knowest nothing yet as thou oughtest to know, neither God, nor the world, nor thyself. Thy will is no longer the will of God, but is utterly perverse and distorted, averse from all good, from all which God loves, and prone to all evil, to every abomination which God hateth. Thy affections are all alienated from God and scattered abroad over all the earth. All thy passions, both thy desires and diversions, thy joys and sorrows, thy hopes and fears are out of favour, are either undue in their degree, or placed on undue objects. So that there is

* Sermon on the New Birth.

no soundness in thy soul, but from the crown of thy head to the sole of thy foot, there are only wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores. Such is the inbred corruption of thy heart, of thy very inmost nature."*

The Rev. R. Watson, speaking of the death of the "soul in a moral sense," says, "It consists in a separation from communion with God, and is manifested by the dominion of earthly, corrupt dispositions and habits, and an entire indifference or aversion to spiritual and heavenly things. This too (he continues) is represented as the state of all who are not quickened by the instrumentality of the gospel, employed for the purpose by the power and agency of the divine Author. 'And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins.' The state of the regenerate mind is, in accordance with this, represented as a resurrection, and passing from death unto life."†

Evidently then, it is a doctrine of the Methodist Church, that Adam by his disobedience involved his posterity, equally with himself, in spiritual death; that in this state they are born, and in this state they continue, until regenerated by the Holy Spirit. But this is Calvinism, and makes the triangle a four-sided figure.

Now, as Mr. Wesley, in his Review of Dr. Taylor on Original Sin, has shown this last side to be scriptural; and as Mr. Watson has "established it that the full penalty of Adam's offence passed upon his posterity," so that "they are born under the whole malediction," although any two sides of a triangle are greater than a third side, in mathematics, it follows that one side of a four-sided figure may be greater than three sides, in theology.

* Sermon on the Way to the Kingdom. The same doctrine is taught by Mr. Wesley in his sermon on "The Way of Salvation," "The Righteousness of Faith," "The Privilege of those born of God," &c. † Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FREE AGENCY OF MAN, SELF-DETERMINING POWER OF THE WILL, ETC.

THAT man is a free and accountable agent, is believed by both Calvinists and Arminians. They, at the same time however, alternately charge each other with error and inconsistency on this subject. How far either party may be obnoxious to the charge, the reader must judge. At all events, their views are widely different. Arminians contend,

1. That our first parents, by their disobedience, plunged themselves and their posterity into a state of spiritual impotency and irresponsibility, and that free agency and accountability were graciously restored. Mr. Wesley says, "God being reconciled to man through the Son of his love, in some measure reinscribed his law on the heart of his dark sinful creature."*

The General Conference says, "We believe that in the moment Adam fell he had no freedom left, but that God, when of his own free grace, he gave the promise of a Saviour to him and his posterity, graciously restored to mankind a liberty and power to accept of proffered salvation."† "Natural free-will in the present state of man (we) do not understand. (We) only assert that there is a measure of free will, supernaturally restored to every man, together with that supernatural light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world."‡

Dr. Fisk says, "Even the power of the will to

* Sermon on the Original nature, properties, and uses of the Law.

† Doctrinal Tracts, page 154. ‡ Ibid. page 47.

choose life, and the conditions of life, is a gracious power."* "The Arminian ground maintains constitutional depravity, and salvation by grace, from the foundation to the top-stone, including of course, a gracious ability to choose life and gain heaven."† "Arminians believe that grace may and does restore the power to choose God before regeneration."‡

Dr. Adam Clarke, speaking of man after the fall, says, "He appears to have lost all spiritual light and understanding, and even his moral feeling." And "as they (Adam and Eve) were, so would have been all their posterity, had not some gracious principle been restored to enlighten their minds, to give them some knowledge of good and evil, of right and wrong, virtue and vice."§

To this we reply: If God has "in some measure" only reinscribed his law on the heart of man, if he has "supernaturally restored to every man a measure" only "of free will and light," it follows, that man is in "a measure" only, a free agent. This then is one Arminian doctrine on this subject. Take another:

Dr. Fisk tells us that "A moral agent to be free, must be possessed of a self-determining principle"—that if you "make the will anything short of this, you put the whole moral man under foreign and irresistible influences."‖ Of course, then, if the non-possession of such a principle will "put the whole moral man under such influences," the possession of it will put him from under them; or, in other words, will make "a moral agent to be free."

That such is his meaning appears from what is said again. "Herein we differ widely from the Calvinists.

* Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon. † Ibid. No. X.
‡ Ibid. § Clarke's Theology, page 104.
‖ Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

They tell us, man has a natural power to choose life. If so, he has power to get to heaven without grace."*

A second Arminian doctrine then is, that, through the interposition of Christ, man "is possessed of a self-determining principle." And if so, he has been restored entirely to free agency. And if so, "he has power to choose life." And if so, "he has power to get to heaven." Of course then he needs no more grace; and if he needs no more grace, he needs no more prayer.

In connection with the foregoing, it is contended that a self-determining power of the will is essential to accountability.

"Man's obedience or disobedience, if it has any just relations to rewards and punishments, must, in its responsible character, rest upon the self-determining principle of the will."† "He has within himself a self-determining principle, in the exercise of which he becomes responsible."‡ "The mind may be free to act in one direction, yet it may have so utterly lost its moral equilibrium as to be utterly incapable, of its own nature, to act in an opposite direction, and therefore, not in the full and responsible sense, a free agent. * * * * * The understanding may be darkened, the conscience may be seared or polluted, the will, that is the power of willing, may, to all good purposes, be enthralled, and this is what we affirm to be the true state and condition of unaided human nature."§ "The simple question is, has fallen man on the whole the power to make a right choice, or has he not? We say, without grace he has not, and therefore fallen man is not, in the responsible sense of that term, a free agent without grace."‖ "If it be asked whether disinclination can ever be so strong as to destroy the

* Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon. † Ibid.
‡ Ibid. § Ibid. No. X. ‖ Ibid.

freedom of the will to act in one particular direction, I answer, most unhesitatingly, Yes; and if that disinclination is either created or derived, and not the result of an antecedent choice, the possessor is not morally obligated to act in opposition to it, unless he receives foreign aid to help his infirmities, and to strengthen him for a contrary choice."*

The Rev. R. Watson says: "It is not denied that the will in its purely natural state, and independent of all grace, can incline only to evil." And he contends, that under this "invincible depravity," and "born with this moral disease," he is not "punishable."†

To this we reply: 1st. That if this be true, it follows, that the fall of our first parents, inasmuch as it brought man into a state in which to sin, and consequently to suffer for sin, was impossible, instead of being an evil, would, if let alone, have been an inconceivable blessing. It follows, 2d. That the death of Christ, inasmuch as it restored man to the only condition in which to sin, and consequently to suffer, was possible, instead of being a blessing at all, is an inconceivable curse. The sin of Adam, therefore, raised our nature high, even to a state of sinless perfection, while the death of Christ reduced that nature low. The former introduced holiness, immortality, and eternal life, while the latter introduced sin, and death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. And so says Mr. Wesley: "Mankind in general have gained by the fall of Adam, a capacity of attaining more holiness and happiness on earth than it would have been possible for them to attain if Adam had not fallen." "How little reason (therefore) have we to repine at the fall of our first parents, since herefrom we may

* Calvinistic Controversy, No. X.

† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.

derive such unspeakable advantages, both in time and in eternity."*

It is true our Saviour said, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,"† &c., but according to Arminians this should read, God so hated the world, &c. It is true again, the apostle John says, that "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;"‡ but, according to Arminians, hatred, wrath, and ruin came. It is true further, that at the birth of Christ a multitude of the heavenly host praised God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will to man."§ But, according to Arminians, this should have been, Wo! wo! wo! to the inhabitants of the world, for the great day of his wrath is come.

"Earth felt the wound (when Christ was born,) and Nature,
From her seat, sighing through all her works,
Gave signs of wo, that all was lost."

Such are the necessary consequences, if Arminianism be true. And yet Arminians say: "The gospel plan, with all its provisions and conditions, is of grace." That "there is not a step in that whole system but rests on grace, is presented by grace, and executed through grace."‖ Then truly, in the language of Dr. Fisk, "The gospel privileges with which men are mocked, if they can be termed grace at all, must be called damning grace."¶ Or, in the language of Mr. Wesley, "God never loved the world, according to this doctrine, but rather hated it greatly, in sending his Son to be crucified for it."**

It is true, that according to Dr. Clarke, "God has

* Sermon on God's Love to fallen Man.
‡ John i. 17.
‖ Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
** Doctrinal Tracts, page 101.
† John iii. 16.
§ Luke ii. 14, 15.
¶ Ibid.

inspired man with a desire to be saved, and this alone places him in a salvable state."* For, "had man been left just as he was when he fell from God, he would have been utterly unsalvable, as he appears to have lost all his spiritual light, and understanding, and even his moral feeling."†

It is true, also, that the "Theology of that divine is made up of extracts from his writings, approved of and published by the General Conference; but it is true, also, that all the authors we have thus far quoted, except one,‡ are published by the sanction of the same body. As to flat contradictions, therefore, why, that we may expect.

There is still another sentiment in the quotations on which we have been commenting, wonderfully at variance with common sense and revelation. It is that "disinclination, which is not the result of an antecedent choice, may be so strong as to destroy free agency and responsibility, unless the possessor receives foreign aid to help his infirmities and strengthen him for a contrary choice."

If this be true, then it follows that the man who is possessed of feelings so honest that he *cannot* will to defraud: and the parent who is so affectionate that he *cannot* will to hate or murder his children; and the woman who is so virtuous that she *cannot* will an act of lewdness; and the man, of principles so honourable, that he *cannot* will an act of meanness; and God, whose disinclination to falsehood is such that he "*cannot lie*,"§ are not free agents, unless they receive foreign aid, to help their infirmities and strengthen them for a contrary choice: while beings of such easy principles, that in all such cases they can as readily

* Clarke's Theology, page 96.
† Ibid. page 104.
‡ Bangs' Reply to Haskel.
§ Titus i. 2.

go one way as the other, are free agents and the only free agents.

Let not the reader suppose we push the consequence beyond the doctrine. "We grant," says the Rev. N. L. Bangs, "that so far as man is influenced by motive or otherwise, his liberty is *so far impaired.*"* Of course then, if he has the least taint of honour, holiness, or depravity, he is so far deprived of free agency.

Dr. Fisk says, "Man, in this life, is in a state of trial; good and evil are presented before him as objects of choice, and upon this choice are suspended eternal consequences of happiness or misery. Of a being thus circumstanced, it is not enough to say, he is free to choose as he does, unless you can say also, he is *equally* free to make an opposite choice."†

Then it follows that General Hull was not a free agent, nor responsible for surrendering to the British, when he could have easily whipped them, and that the court-martial that sentenced him to be shot for cowardice, was alone guilty in the transaction. Then it follows that a rich miser, who loves money more than he loves honesty, is not bound to pay a just debt, and that a court of justice has no right to enforce payment; that a parent who, although possessed of ample health and strength to provide for his household, but whose aversion to labour is greater than his love for his children, "is not in the responsible sense of the term, a free agent."‡ To the Calvinist it appears, on the contrary, that the essence of liberty consists in our being permitted to do as we please—that as the act of doing is preceded by a determination to do, which determination is itself a will or choice, an honourable man will not consider his free agency de-

* Reviewer Reviewed, page 45.

† Calvinistic Controversy, No. VIII. ‡ 1 Tim. v. 8.

stroyed if he *cannot* will to do what is mean—that God acts freely, notwithstanding his disinclination to falsehood is such that he "*cannot* lie." And that if the mere want of a will, or disposition to work, will not save a lazy servant from the lash; and the mere want of a will, or disposition to pay a just debt, will not save a rich miser from the law, neither will the mere want of a will or disposition excuse a sinner, who with capacity to love sin, and to commit it, neglects to employ that capacity in loving and serving God.

But farther, the Calvinist thinks that "a man can no more cease to be a free moral agent than he can annihilate his soul. God has made him free—has decreed that he shall be free, and he is obliged to be free, and to do as he pleases, and he cannot do otherwise than as he pleases. If any one thinks he can, let him try to do something which he does not will to do. If he says his inability to do this destroys his free agency, he adopts the sentiment that he cannot be a free agent, unless he can do what he does not will to do." That, to require of another what, although he has a disposition to do he has not capacity to do, would be unjust, is self-evident. But, that to require of another what he has capacity to do, and what he ought to do, but what he may have no disposition to do, is not unjust, is self-evident also.

Now, that man has capacity to repent, when he is conscious of having sinned, we know; that he has capacity to believe on proper testimony, we know; and that he has capacity to love, we know. Hence, when the Scriptures say, in reference to sin against God, "Except ye repent ye shall perish;"* and when they say, in reference to faith in Christ, "He that believeth not shall be damned;"† and when they say in reference to loving the Saviour, "If any man love

* Luke xiii. 3. † Mark xvi. 16.

not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, maranatha,"* the divine Being is not chargeable with "reaping where he has not sown, nor of gathering where he has not strewed."†

The essence of religion is love. Hence, "Love is the fulfilling of the law."‡ When, therefore, man is required to "love the Lord with all his heart," &c., it is required "of him according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not." 2 Cor. viii. 12.

But we proceed to show, fourthly, that according to Arminians there is no such liberty or self-determining power of the will as has been contended for.

Mr. Wesley says, "If a natural man be one of those (who are termed men of learning) he can talk at large of his rational faculties; of the freedom of his will, and the absolute necessity of such freedom in order to constitute man a moral agent. He reads, and argues, and proves to demonstration, that every man may do as he will; may dispose his own heart to evil or good, as it seems best in his own eyes. Thus the God of this world spreads a double veil of blindness over his heart, lest by any means the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine upon it." "But though he strive with all his might, he cannot conquer. Sin is mightier than he. He would fain escape, but is so fast in prison that he cannot get forth. He resolves against sin, but yet sins on. He sees the snare, and abhors, yet runs into it. So much does his boasted reason avail! only to enhance his guilt and increase his misery. Such is the freedom of the will! free only to evil. Free to 'drink in iniquity like water;' to wander further and further from the living God, and do more 'despite to the Spirit of grace.'"§

* 1 Cor. xvi. 22. † Matt. xxv. 24. ‡ Rom. xiii. 10.
§ Sermon on The spirit of Bondage and Adoption.

The Rev. R. Watson says, "An entire indifference or aversion to heavenly things is represented to be the state of all who are not quickened by the instrumentality of the gospel, employed for this purpose by the power and agency of its divine Author."* Again he says, "We are here in a dark and wretched dungeon—have lost spiritual liberty and light—are fast tied, bound with the chain of our sins and are under sentence of death."†

If then "we have lost spiritual liberty and light," where is the liberty of the will? Where is that moral equilibrium which we have been told is essential to liberty? If again, there is in all who are not quickened by the instrumentality of the gospel, an entire aversion to heavenly things," where is that "self-determining principle of which a moral agent, to be free, must be possessed?" And if again, "the will is free only to evil," &c., where is that "light and grace, as universal as inbred sin, which if not resisted, would work out the salvation of all?"

But we have more yet. Dr. Fisk tells us, that "the affections and propensities, (sometimes called the heart) are the principal seat of depravity, and (that) these are often arrayed in direct hostility to the convictions of the judgment and the feelings of moral obligation—that the will, or that mental power by which we put forth volitions and make decisions, while it is more or less directly or indirectly influenced by the judgment, the conscience and the affections is, in fact, designed to give direction and unity to the whole mental action. . But (that) by sin this harmony has been disturbed, and the unholy affections have gained an undue ascendency; so that in the unregenerate, in all questions of preference between God and

* Theological Institutes, Part ii. Chapter xviii.
† Sermon on the Infliction of Evil upon Mankind.

the world, in spite of the judgment, of conscience and of the will, the world is loved and God hated; that in those cases where we cannot control our affections by a direct volition, we may nevertheless, under the promptings of conscience, and in the light of the judgment, resolve against sin—but that these resolutions, however firmly and repeatedly made, will be carried away and overruled by the strength of the carnal mind."*

Here then, we are told, that the affections and propensities (of man) are the principal seat of depravity; that the will is designed to give, and always does give direction and unity to the whole mental action when there is a proper harmony in the mental powers; but that by sin this harmony has been disturbed, so that in the unregenerate the unholy affections control the will, &c. But if this be so, what becomes of the liberty of the will?

Again, in reply to the objection that "it is the province of the will to control the affections, and not of the affections to control the will, and that the will always possesses power to do this, even in an unregenerate state," they say, "If so, then has he power at any time by an act of the will to love God," which they deny.† But if this be so, where is "the power of choice, and of a contrary choice," without which we are told there can be no free agency?

That we do not misapprehend their meaning is evident from what is said in a preceding number, viz. That "the will is oftener enthralled by the affections, than the affections by the will;" (that) even in common and worldly matters, let a man try by an effort of the will to beget love where it does not exist, or to transfer the affections from one object to another, and how will he succeed? Will love or hatred go or come at your bidding? You might as well attempt by an

* Calvinistic Controversy, No. XIV. † Ibid.

act of the will to make sweet bitter, or bitter sweet, to the physical taste. How much less can a man by an act of the will make all things new, and transfer the heart from the grossness of creature love to the purity of supreme love to God?*

Here we are told that the will is so enthralled by the affections that it cannot will to love God. Where then is the "self-determining power of the will," of which "a moral agent to be free must be possessed?" Is not Mr. Wesley correct therefore, when he says, "the will is free to do evil only."†

Again, we have been told that "the affections and propensities are the principal seat of depravity," and that they enthrall the will. But is not the will enthralled by itself also? In answer to this we will hear Mr. Wesley speaking of "the condition wherein all men are since the fall:" he says, "Our nature is altogether corrupt in every power and faculty, and our will depraved equally with the rest, is wholly bent to indulge our natural corruptions." Sermon on Self-denial.

2. We will hear Arminius. Speaking of "the free will of man," he says, "In his lapsed and sinful state man is not capable, of and by himself, either to think, to will, or to do, that which is really good. But it is necessary for him to be regenerated and renewed in his intellect, affections, or will, and in all his powers, by God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, that he may be qualified rightly to understand, esteem, consider, will and perform, whatever is truly good." Life of Arminius by Bangs, page 222.

Now then, as "our nature is altogether corrupt in every power and faculty, and our will depraved equally with the rest," so that "man, in his lapsed and sinful state, is not capable either to think, to

* Calvinistic Controversy, No. XIII.

† Sermon on the Spirit of Bondage and Adoption.

will, or to do that which is really good, until regenerated and renewed in his intellect, affections, will and all his powers, by God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit," if this is not a giving up of all for which Arminians contend as having been restored to fallen man, then language has no meaning.

The reader has now seen the fourth side of the four-sided figure we undertook to demonstrate. We once heard Dr. Ives, the then Bishop of North Carolina, preach a laboured and eloquent sermon on "The Oneness of Truth." His object was to show that truth is necessarily one, or in other words, that the opposite of truth cannot be true. The inference, though not expressed, was natural, viz. Admitting Episcopacy to be true, non Episcopacy is not true. We were surprised to witness so great an effort to prove what we supposed no one doubted. Those however were our younger days. We had not then read many Arminian authors, and of course had not learned, as we have seen it stated since, that truth is not one only, but is sometimes two, sometimes three, and sometimes four, according to circumstances.

Having shown by Arminians themselves that there is no such self-determining power of the will as they contend for, it follows, according to the same authority, but no other—

1. That man is not a free, and consequently, not an accountable agent. 2. That if there is any such thing as sin in the world, God is the author of it. The Rev. R. Watson remarks correctly, though in so doing he bears very heavily on himself and his Arminian brethren, that "the dogma which makes God the efficient cause or author of sin, is direct blasphemy, and is one of those culpable extravagancies into which men are sometimes betrayed by a blind attachment to some favourite theory." Theol. Institutes, Part ii. Chap. vi.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

CALVINISTS contend that all the consequences involved by the divine decrees, are necessarily involved by the divine omniscience, and hence that every objection urged against the former may be urged against the latter also. Although Arminians deny this, we undertake to prove, not only that it is so, but that it is so by the admission of those who deny it. That we may the more strikingly present the issue involved, we will introduce it with the following dialogue between an Arminian and a Calvinist.

Arminian. The doctrine of predestination has long appeared to me so utterly at war with reason and revelation that I cannot beelive it.

Calvinist. That, sir, I suppose is owing to the fact that you have not properly examined it. You have no doubt heard much said against it—perhaps you have seen the numerous misquotations against it that abound in the works of Wesley, the volume of Methodist Doctrinal Tracts, and Fisk's Calvinistic Controversy; some of which are forged in part, many of them forged entirely. You may also have seen the numerous misrepresentations of that doctrine that are to be found, not only in the books just named, but also in Watson's Theological Institutes, Foster's Objections to Calvinism, &c. &c. &c. Now, you supposing these quotations, &c. to have been truthfully made, naturally suppose that Calvinism merits all the odium raised against it. As I desire to correct your impressions, permit me to ask you a few questions. Are you of the opinion that all men will be saved?

A. By no means.

C. But you have no doubt it will be determined on the day of judgment who are to be saved, and who are to be lost.

A. Certainly, sir.

C. Is the great God under the necessity of waiting so long, before he can ascertain who the righteous are, that are to be saved, and who the wicked are, that are to be lost?

A. By no means; for "known unto God are all his works from the beginning." Acts xv. 18.

C. When do you suppose he obtained that knowledge?

A. (*After a short pause.*) He must have known it from eternity.

C. Then it must have been fixed from eternity?

A. That does not follow.

C. Then it follows, that he did not know it from eternity, but only guessed at it; for how can Omniscience know what is yet uncertain?

A. Then it does seem that it must have been fixed from eternity.

C. One question more will prove that you believe the doctrine of predestination. You have admitted what can never be disproved, viz. that God could not have known from eternity, who will be saved, &c. unless it had been fixed from eternity. If then it was fixed from eternity, who fixed it?

After this introduction we proceed to the work before us. In reference to divine omniscience, Mr. Wesley and the General Conference entertain views somewhat peculiar. Mr. Wesley says: "The almighty, all-wise God, sees and knows from everlasting to everlasting, all that is, that was, and that is to come, through one eternal now. With him nothing is past or future, but all things equally present. He has,

therefore, if we may speak according to the truth of things, no fore-knowledge, no after-knowledge."* The General Conference say: "Properly speaking, there is no such thing as fore-knowledge or after-knowledge with God, but strictly knowledge, present knowledge."†

But, as between an eternity past and an eternity to come there is a long interval, in which are many occurrences, it is difficult to conceive how "all things" can be "equally present" to the divine mind, or how it can be said that "with him nothing is past or future"—that not the creation of the world even, is a past event, or the day of judgment, future; or how it can be said he has "no fore-knowledge" of what will take place, or "after-knowledge" of what has taken place. Calvinists, therefore, greatly prefer the theology of the apostles Peter and Paul. The former tells us that Christ was "delivered according to the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God."‡ And the latter says, "Whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate," &c.§

Again, it is difficult to reconcile what Mr. Wesley and the General Conference say of the omniscience of God, with what they say of the doctrine of election. Speaking of the elect, they say, "It is plain the act of electing is in time, though known before"—that "they were not elected till some thousand years after the foundation of the world"—"were not chosen before they believed."‖ But how could "the act of electing be known before," if God has no fore-knowledge?

Again, if to the divine mind "all things are equally present," so that "nothing is past or future," then the "conversion" of the elect was as much present in

* Sermon on Predestination.
† Methodist Magazine, Vol. iii. page 13. ‡ Acts ii. 23.
§ Rom. viii. 29. ‖ Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 138, 139.

eternity, as it is when the conversion takes place. If then the election took place at the time of their conversion, and their conversion was as much present to the divine mind in eternity past, as at any time since, how can it be said that "the election did not take place till some thousand years after the foundation of the world?"

As Mr. Watson so completely refutes Mr. Wesley and the General Conference, we will let him speak. "The knowledge of the actual existence of things with God is successive, because things come into being in succession. As to actual existences, there is fore-knowledge, present-knowledge, and after-knowledge with God as with ourselves."*

But again: If "the almighty, all-wise God, sees and knows from everlasting to everlasting, all that was, and that is to come, through an eternal now," then it follows, that all events are to him certainly known. And if they are certainly known, they are certainly fixed. And if they are certainly fixed, they cannot, by any agency of man, be changed. But how, it may be asked, can this be reconciled with the free agency of man? Mr. Wesley saw this difficulty, and hence, in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Robertson, dated September 24th, 1753, he says: "If any one asks, How is God's fore-knowledge consistent with our freedom? I plainly answer, I cannot tell."† When, therefore, the Calvinist is asked, "How are God's decrees consistent with our freedom?" he replies as Wesley did in reference to the divine fore-knowledge, "I cannot tell."

Now, as Mr. Wesley admits that the divine omniscience involves the consequences involved by the divine decrees, is it not strange he should overlook

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. v.
† Works, Vol. vi. page 720.

the former, yet say of the latter, "It destroys all the attributes of God at once. It overturns both his justice, mercy, and truth. Yea, it represents the most holy God as worse than the devil; as both more false, more cruel, more unjust."* Why not say the same of fore-knowledge also, which, according to his own admission, is equally obnoxious to the charge?

Mr. Watson and Dr. Fisk, to avoid the difficulty Mr. Wesley admitted, start on the farther side of the ditch they had to cross. The former says, "The prescience of God is also a subject by which Calvinists have endeavoured to give some plausibility to their system." And he argues, that "the simple knowledge of an action, whether present, past, or to come, has no influence upon it of any kind. When, therefore it is said, that what God foresees will certainly happen, nothing more can be reasonably meant than that he is certain it will happen"—that "there is this certainty in the divine mind as to the actions of men, that they will happen: but that they must happen, cannot follow from this circumstance."†

The latter says, "Whatever God foreknows, or foresees, will undoubtedly come to pass. But the simple question is, does the event take place because it is foreknown, or is it foreknown because it will take place. Or in other words, does God know an event to be certain, or does his knowing it to be certain, make it certain? The question thus stated, at once suggests the true answer; for he would be considered a fool or a madman, who should seriously assert that a knowledge of a certainty produced that certainty. According to that, a certainty must exist in order to be foreknown, and it must be foreknown in order to exist. From all which it appears, that fore-know-

* Sermon on Free Grace.

† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.

ledge can have no influence in making a future event certain."* Each of these positions is, that the mere knowledge of an event does not render it certain. Calvinists contend, on the contrary, that an event cannot be certainly known, unless it is certain, and that the divine fore-knowledge necessarily implies the divine decrees. Let us see.

Admitting the divine fore-knowledge, God must have known from eternity that the world would exist. But the world could not exist unless he would create it. Now, although he could know it might exist, he could not know it would exist unless he had determined to create it.

Again: Being omniscient, he must have always known that man would sin and fall. But man could not sin and fall unless created. God's knowledge of that event, therefore, depended on his decree to create man. But again: If God created man, knowing that he would sin and fall, he must have been willing on the whole that he should sin and fall, for otherwise, he would not have created him. But to will to create him, with the certain knowledge of a result that could not happen unless he was created, was to decree the result. The same is true of the betrayal and crucifixion of our Saviour, and, in short, of every act of every man on earth, so that the divine fore-knowledge necessarily implies the divine decrees, and involves all that they involve. And so, every objection which can be urged against the latter applies with equal force to the former also. Mr. Watson and Dr. Fisk, and the General Conference, would have been more consistent, therefore, if, like Mr. Wesley, they had acknowledged that they could not reconcile the divine fore-knowledge with the free agency of man.†

* Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

† Arminians contend that the divine decrees are consequent of, and depend upon the divine fore-knowledge. To this we reply, that

To avoid this difficulty, the celebrated Adam Clarke adopted a theory which Mr. Watson ascribes to the Chevalier Ramsay.*

"Omniscience," says he, "or power to know all things, is an attribute of God, and exists in him as omnipotence, or power to do all things. . God cannot have fore-knowledge strictly speaking, because this would suppose there was something coming, in what we call futurity, which had not yet arrived in the presence of the Deity. Neither can he have any after-knowledge, strictly speaking, for this would suppose that something that had taken place in what we call preteriety or past time, had got beyond the presence of the Deity. As God exists in all that can be called eternity, so he is equally everywhere. Nothing can be past to him, because he equally exists in all past time; futurity and preteriety are relative terms to us, but they can have no relation to that 'God with whom all that is past, all that is present, and all that is future to man, exists in one infinite, indivisible, and eternal now.' As God's omnipotence implies his power to do all things, so God's omniscience implies his power to know all things: but we must take heed that we meddle not with the infinite free agency of this eternal being. Though God can do all things, he does not do all things, but such only as are proper to be done. . . God is omniscient, and can know all things, but does it follow from this that he must know all things? Is he not as free in the volitions of his wisdom, as he is in the volitions of his power.

so far as a knowledge of what ought to be, is concerned, it is true. But so far as the knowledge of what shall be is concerned, it is not true. God must have known what, on the whole, ought to be, before he could knowingly decree that it should be. But then he could know nothing more than that it might be, until he decreed that it should be.

* For this theory, see Watson's Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. iv.

God has ordained some things absolutely certain. He has ordained others as contingent. By contingent, I mean such things as the infinite wisdom of God has poised on the possibility of being or not being, leaving it to the will of intelligent beings to turn the scale." "If there be no such things as contingencies in the world, then everything is fixed, and determined by an unalterable decree and purpose of God, and not only all free agency is destroyed, but all agency of every kind, except that of the Creator himself." "Thus all vice and virtue, praise and blame, merit and demerit, guilt and innocence, are at once confounded, and all distinctions of this kind confounded with them. Now allowing the doctrine of contingency of human action, and it must be allowed, in order to shun the above absurdities and blasphemies, then we see every intelligent creature accountable for its own works, and for the use it makes of the power with which the Creator has endowed it."*

If Paul wrote "some things hard to be understood,"† Dr. Clarke has written some things much harder. For when he says "God exists in all that can be called eternity"—"equally exists in all past time"—"dwells in every point of eternity," &c. he is too deep for a Calvinist. But when he adds, "with whom all that is past, all that is present, and all that is future to man, exists in one infinite, indivisible and eternal now," and yet says there are some things God does not know, he blasphemously charges the Deity with being ignorant of what takes place in his presence—or, in other words, with a degree of stupidity unknown among intelligent beings. Again he says, "Omniscience, or a power to know all things, is an attribute of God, and exists with him as omnipotence, or the power to do all things," &c. Here he teaches

* Comments on Acts, Chap. ii. † 2 Peter iii. 16.

that omniscience, that is, knowing all things, is nothing more than "a power to know," &c.

But again, he charges the Deity with imposing upon himself voluntary ignorance. His argument is, that as there are some things God ought not to do, so there are some things, which if he should know, then certain disastrous consequences, which he names, must follow. Of course, then, he is culpable in proportion to the evils that creep into his government in consequence of this voluntary ignorance, and but for which they would have been prevented. Now this is a crime the people of these United States would not tolerate in their President. And yet Dr. Clarke says truly, there is no other way to avoid all the consequences of predestination.

When we sat at the feet of the venerable Dr. Alexander, in 1827, he remarked in his Introductory Lecture to the new class, among other things we remember, that "all knowledge is valuable;" and he therefore urged us, "with all our getting, to get knowledge." According to Dr. Clarke, however, this would not do for God, as there are some things he ought not to know. To us it appears, on the contrary, that God ought to know all things, so that if there are some things he ought not to know, he may know them; and then, if it be true, that he "is as free in the volitions of his wisdom as he is in the volitions of his power," he can forget exactly all he ought not to know.

Dr. Fisk, on the contrary, differs very widely from Dr. Clarke. "To know," says he, "is so essential to God, that the moment he ceases to know all that is, or will be, or might be, under any possible contingency, he ceases to be God."*

This latter divine is certainly correct. But while he comes down on Dr. Clarke with Atheism, Dr. Clarke

* Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

comes down on him with Calvinism. On the whole, notwithstanding Dr. Clarke's notion is atheistical and blasphemous, yet, inasmuch as it met with great favour in the Methodist Church, till the appearance of Watson's Theological Institutes, it seems a pity that "brother Fisk" should be so severe on brother Clarke, especially as the latter was in favour with the General Conference long before the former was known.

The Rev. R. Watson, after stating the theory of Dr. Clarke, says: "To this it may be answered, that the infinite power of God is in Scripture represented (as in the nature of things it must be) as an infinite capacity, and not as an infinite act; but the knowledge of God is, on the contrary, never represented there as a capacity to acquire knowledge, but as actually comprehending all things that are, and all things that can be. 2. That the choosing to know some things and not to know others, supposes a reason why he refuses to know any class of things or events, which reason, it would seem, can only arise out of their nature and circumstances, and therefore supposes at least a partial knowledge of them, from which the reason of his not choosing to know them arises. The doctrine is therefore somewhat contradictory. But—3. It is fatal to this opinion, that it does not at all meet the difficulty arising out of the question of the congruity of divine prescience and the free actions of man; since some contingent actions for which men have been made accountable, we are sure have been foreknown by God, because by his Spirit in the prophets, they were foretold, and if the freedom of man can in these cases be reconciled to the prescience of God, there is no greater difficulty in any other case which can possibly occur."*

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. iv.

Again he says, "That man is accountable for his conduct, and therefore free, that is, laid under no invincible necessity of acting in a given manner, are doctrines clearly contained in the Bible, and the notion of necessity has here its full and satisfactory reply. But if a difficulty should be felt in reconciling the freedom of an action with the prescience of it, it affords not the slightest relief to deny the foreknowledge of God, as to actions in general, while the Scriptures contain predictions of the conduct of men, whose actions cannot have been determined by invincible necessity, because they were actions for which they received from God a just and marked punishment. Whether the scheme of relief be, that the knowledge of God, like his power, is arbitrary; or that the prescience of contingencies is impossible; so long as the Scriptures are allowed to contain predictions of the conduct of men, good or bad, the difficulty remains in all its force. The whole body of prophecy is founded on the certain prescience of contingent actions, or it is not prediction, but guess and conjecture—to such fearful results does the denial of prescience lead! No one can deny that the Bible contains predictions of the rise and fall of several kingdoms—that Daniel, for instance, prophesied of the rise, the various fortunes, and the fall of the celebrated monarchies of antiquity. But empires do not rise and fall wholly by immediate acts of God. They are not thrown up like new islands in the ocean; they do not fall like cities in an earthquake, by the direct exertion of divine power; they are carried through their various stages of advance and decline by the virtues and the vices of men, which God makes the instruments of their prosperity or their destruction. Counsels, wars, science, revolutions, all crowd in their agency, and the predictions are of the combined and ultimate results of all these circumstances, which, as

arising out of the virtues and vices of men, out of innumerable acts of choice, are contingent. Seen they must have been through all their stages, and seen in their results, for prophecy has registered those results. The prescience of them cannot be denied, for that is on record; and if certain prescience involves necessity, then are the daily virtues and vices of men not contingent. It was predicted that Babylon should be taken by Cyrus in the midst of a midnight revel, in which the gates should be left unguarded and open. Now, if all the actions which arose out of the warlike disposition and ambition of Cyrus were contingent, what becomes of the principle that it is impossible to foreknow contingencies? They were foreknown because the result of them was predicted. If the midnight revel of the Babylonian monarch was contingent (the circumstances which led to the neglect of the gates of the city) that also was foreknown, because predicted; if not contingent, the actions of both monarchs were necessary, and to neither of them can be ascribed virtue or vice."*

In these quotations Mr. Watson certainly overthrows,

1. What he himself and Dr. Fisk says in a former part of this chapter, viz., "That there is no difficulty in reconciling the fore-knowledge of God with the free agency of man." They not only admit there is a difficulty, but give it a Calvinistic answer. And,

2. They overthrow the theory of Dr. Clarke.

But again, in the "Methodist Magazine," Vol. iii. page 13, a writer, after defining the omniscience of God, says, "Should it be asked how entire freedom of action agrees with this knowledge? I answer, I cannot tell. . . The plain truth is, the subject is too far removed from the province of our faculties and

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. iv.

the sphere of human science, to afford us any safe or satisfactory conclusions. We must therefore satisfy ourselves on the subject from what we perceive in ourselves, from what we observe in others, and from what it has pleased God to reveal to us. We are conscious of acting freely; from analogy and observation we are convinced that our fellow-creatures do the same, and nothing is more obvious than that the divine laws embracing precepts, rewards and punishments, recognize man as a voluntary, not a necessary agent, and consequently at liberty to obey or disobey. On such evidence we must rest till it shall please God to develope what has hitherto been locked up in the treasury of eternal wisdom."

Here then the same difficulty is admitted in reference to the divine omniscience, which Calvinists admit in reference to the divine decrees, viz., "How entire freedom of action agrees with" them; and the same answer is given by Arminians in reference to the difficulty they admit, which Calvinists give to the objection charged against the divine decrees. Is it asked, Why then do the former urge this objection so furiously against predestination only? We answer, This is one of their inconsistencies.

Again, Arminians admit they cannot reconcile the sincerity of God, in exhorting, warning, and inviting those that perish with the certain fore-knowledge that they will perish.

"That God should prohibit many things," say they, "which he nevertheless knows will occur, and in the prescience of which he regulates his dispensations to bring out of these circumstances various results which he makes subservient to the displays of his mercy and his justice; and particularly in the case of those individuals, who he knows will finally perish, he exhorts, warns, invites, and in a word takes active and influential means to prevent a foreseen result. This

forms the difficulty; because in the case of man, the prescience of failure would, in many cases, paralyze all effort; whereas in the government of God, men are treated in our views with as much intensity of care and effort, as though the issue of things was entirely unknown. But if the perplexity arises from this, nothing can be more clear than that the question is not how to reconcile God's prescience with the freedom of man, but how to reconcile the conduct of God towards man considered as a free agent, with his own prescience—how to assign a congruity to warnings, exhortations and other means adopted to prevent destruction as to individuals, with the certain foresight of that terrible result."*

To this they give the following answer, viz.

"In this, however, no moral attribute of God is impugned. On the contrary, mercy requires the publication of the means of deliverance, if man be under a dispensation of grace, and justice requires it if man is to be judged for the use or abuse of mercy. The difficulty then entirely resolves itself into a mere matter of feeling, which of course, (as we cannot be judges of a nature infinite in perfection, nor of proceedings, which, in the unlimited range of the government of God, may have connections and bearings beyond our comprehension,) we cannot reduce to a human standard. . . . Are we to deny that we have no proper or direct notions of God because we cannot find him out to perfection? . .. . We fall into new difficulties through these speculations, but do not escape the true one. If the freedom of man is denied, the moral attributes of God are impugned, and the difficulty, as a matter of feeling is heightened. Divine prescience cannot be denied, because the prophetic Scriptures have determined that already; and if Archbishop

*Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. iv.

King's interpretation of fore-knowledge be resorted to, the *something* substituted for prescience and *equivalent* to it comes in to bring us back to the fallacious circle, to the point from which we started."*

A part of this answer is rational and scriptural, but a part of it is not. We, however, will let it stand for what it is worth. Is it asked again, Why do Arminians so furiously urge an objection against the Calvinistic doctrine of Election and of the Atonement (viz. that they cannot be reconciled to the exhortations, calls and warnings of the gospel,) which they admit lies with equal force against the fore-knowledge of God? We answer, This is another of their inconsistencies.

We have now presented the reader with another four-sided figure, viz., one side by Wesley and the General Conference, one side by Dr. Clarke, one side by Dr. Fisk, Mr. Watson and the General Conference, and one side by Mr. Watson. Now, as these are all standard authors in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and as the Articles of Religion of that Church are silent on the subject under review, any minister or layman in that communion may embrace any or all of these conflicting views, and still be reputed orthodox.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DECREES OF GOD.

In this chapter we take up the Decrees of God, and if we mistake not, will find the inconsistency of Arminians as great here as on any subject yet considered. The Calvinistic view may be briefly stated thus:

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. iv.

As the knowledge, wisdom, goodness and power of men change, their principles and purposes of action are changed also. With the knowledge a man possesses, he may determine how he will act in a given case, but with an increase of knowledge, or under an impulse of passion, he may determine otherwise. With the knowledge he has he may determine to buy a certain farm, or set out to a distant city; but if he afterwards learns that the title to the farm is worthless, or that the plague is in the city, he changes his purpose. Now, if his knowledge had been perfect from the beginning, his purpose would have been fixed from the beginning. In the common affairs of life, all sensible men determine beforehand how they will carry on their business, and that determination is formed in accordance with the best information they can obtain. In cases where they must act, they determine how they will act, as soon as they know how they ought to act, unless some unhallowed influence interferes. Now, as the knowledge and wisdom of God were always infinite, he must have always known how he ought to act in every case. His holiness being perfect, always prompts him to decree to act correctly. And his power being infinite, always enables him to act as his holy attributes direct. Now as he was always possessed of these attributes, he can have no accession of knowledge nor succession of ideas. And as he always knew how he ought to act, he must have eternally determined how he would act in all cases in all time to come. Accordingly, he says of himself, "I am the Lord, I change not;"* "the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither the shadow of a turning;"† "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done,

* Malachi iii. 6. † James iii. 7.

saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."* Hence, Job says of him, "He is of one mind, who can turn him;"† and Job says, "The counsel of the Lord shall stand for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."‡

The sacred writers, it is true, do speak of changes in God, but in so doing, they "speak after the manner of men" in condescension to us.§

If then "the counsel of the Lord shall stand for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations," what he does, he must have eternally intended to do; and what he permits to be done, he must have eternally intended to permit. Accordingly we read of our "being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."‖ If we inquire, when was this purpose formed? Paul answers, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."¶ The Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, therefore, in answer to the question, "What are the decrees of God?" gives the following answer, viz.

"The decrees of God are his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his will, whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass."**

Here it will be observed, that the Catechism contains the exact sentiment of the Scriptures, expressed in almost the very language of the Holy Spirit. Some years ago a young lawyer of our acquaintance, on being brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, had the Presbyterian Confession of Faith put into his hands, under the hope, on the part of him who loaned it, that it would "set him right in regard

* Isaiah xliv. 10. † Psalm xxxiii. 11. ‡ Job xxiii. 13.
§ Rom. iii. 5. ‖ Eph. i. 11. ¶ Eph. iii. 11.
** Question 7.

to Calvinism." After reading what is said of the Divine attributes, in Chapter II., and seeing that what is said in Chapter III. must follow, he remarked, to the no little disappointment of his Arminian friend, "I would as leave read the Bible without a God, as to read it, if it did not teach predestination."

But to the doctrine, that God governs men according to fixed decrees, it is objected that it necessarily destroys the free agency of man, and consequently, makes God the author of sin.

To this we reply, Calvinists make a distinction between the positive and permissive decrees of God. That is, they maintain that God has decreed positively, or efficaciously, all that is good, and permissively all that is evil; and that in decreeing to permit the evil, he intended to bound it by his holiness and overrule it for good, so that "the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."* Thus says the Confession of Faith, Chapter III. Sec. 1, "God from all eternity, did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass, yet so as thereby neither is God the author or approver of sin, nor is violence done to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."

Here then we are taught,

1. That God has from eternity unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass.

2. That this ordination is in such a way that "he is not thereby the author or approver of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes (that is, means) taken away, but rather established." If, therefore, man is a free moral agent, (which no one doubts)

* Psalm lxxvi. 10.

it was God who made him free; and if he made him free, he decreed to make him free; so that he is a free agent by the decree of God—a free agent of necessity, so that he is not free to cease being free.

If it is asked, How is this possible? the Confession answers, "Although in relation to the fore-knowledge of God, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes,* either necessarily, freely, or contingently."†

"The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and to all other sins of angels and men, and that, not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most holy bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends, yet so that the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God, who being most holy, and righteous, neither is, nor can be, the author or approver of sin."‡

Here then we are taught,

1. That the providence of God extendeth itself to all sin.

2. That although God in his inscrutable providence sees proper to permit sin, he does not let it take its legitimate course, but has joined with the permission "a most holy bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing it in a manifold dispensation to his own holy ends."

* Having decreed the overthrow of the Babylonian government, the second causes were Cyrus and his army. Having decreed to save the family of Jacob from famine, the second causes were Joseph and his brethren. Having decreed the independence of the United States, the second causes were the Declaration of Independence, George Washington, and his army, &c.

† Conf. of Faith, Chap. v. Sec. iii. ‡ Ibid. Sec. iv.

3. That although he permits sin, "the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is, nor can be, the author or approver of it." That for a man, knowingly to permit sin, when he could prevent it, would be a sin, is self-evident; but it does not follow that it is necessarily so with God. The Rev. R. Watson very correctly remarks—"As we cannot be judges of a nature infinite in perfection, nor of proceedings which in the unlimited range of the government of God may have connections and bearings beyond all our comprehension, we cannot reduce (them) to a human standard."*

But to return to the Confession of Faith:

Chap. VI. Sec. 1, says, "Our first parents being seduced by the *subtilty* of the devil, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This, their sin, God was pleased according to his wise and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory." The Larger Catechism says, "God, by his providence, permitted some angels wilfully and irrecoverably to fall into sin and damnation, limiting and controlling that, and all their sins to his own glory." Question 19.

In an Explanatory Catechism published in Scotland a hundred years ago, which has ever since been a standard work in the Presbyterian Church, and is now published by our Board of Publication, we have the following questions and answers, viz.

"*Question.* How do the decrees of God extend to things naturally and morally good?

Answer. Effectively: becaused God is the author and effective cause of all good. Phil. ii. 13.

Q. How do they extend to things morally evil?

A. Permissively and decretively only. Acts xiv. 16.

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. iv.

Q. Is the permissive decree a bare inactive permitting of evil?

A. No, it determines the event of the evil permitted and overrules it to a good end contrary to the intention both of the work and of the worker. Gen. xlv. 8; l. 20.

Q. How do you prove that God cannot be the author of sin?

A. From the contrariety of it to his holy nature and law, and the indignation he has manifested against it in what Christ suffered on account of it, for he can never be the author of that of which he is the avenger."*

The doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, in relation to the divine decrees, then is,

1. That God did foreordain whatever comes to pass, yet so that he is not the author or approver of sin.

2. That his decrees not only offer no violence to the will of the creature, but rather establish the free agency of man, the use of means, &c.

3. That he has decreed positively all that is good, and permissively all that is evil.

4. That he has joined with the permission of evil a most holy bounding, &c.

We will show next that this Calvinistic doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, is a doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Rev. R. Watson says, "If we consider the nature of God, that he is a self-existent and independent Being, the great Creator, and wise Governor of all things—that he is a spiritual and simple being, void

* Fisher's Catechism, page 46. For further proof on this subject the reader is referred to the following books of the Presbyterian Board of Publication, viz. Dr. Green's Lectures on the Shorter Catechism, Question 7; Bible Dictionary, Article "Decree;" Standards of the Presbyterian Church," a Tract.

of all parts and all mixtures that can induce a change —that he is a sovereign and uncontrollable being which nothing from without can affect or work an alteration in—that he is an eternal being which always has, and always will go on in the same tenor of his existence—an omniscient being, who knowing all things, has no reason to act contrary to his first resolves—and in all respects a most perfect being, that admits of no addition or diminution, we cannot but believe that in his essence, in his knowledge, in his will and purposes, he must of necessity be unchangeable. . . . . We esteem changeableness in men either an imperfection or a fault. Their natural changes as to their persons are from weakness and vanity. Their moral changes as to their inclinations and purposes, are from ignorance or inconstancy, and therefore this quality is no way compatible with the glory and attributes of God."*

The reader will recollect that in stating the Calvinistic view of the divine decrees, we argued that they necessarily resulted from the divine attributes. He will here discover that this divine infers the decrees of God in the same way, viz., That in consequence of his perfect attributes, he "has no reason to act contrary to his first resolves," but that "in his essence, knowledge, will and purposes (or decrees) he must of necessity be unchangeable."†

Again, Mr. Watson says, "The plans of God reach from the beginning to the end of time; they pass the limits of time and issue in eternity. . . . . And thus it has been from the foundation of the world: God subordinating everything to the counsel of his own will, has been making everything, whether bright

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. v.

† It may not be amiss to state that the language which Mr. Watson here adopts, as expressing his own views, is quoted from that staunch old Calvinist, Charnock.

or dark, whether forward or retrograde in its movement, to accomplish more fully and illustriously his great and glorious designs."*

No one could state more clearly and unequivocally the Calvinistic view of the divine decrees.

But we have "line upon line and precept upon precept." Mr. Watson, speaking of the death of Christ, says again: "We behold wicked men and the ever blessed God accomplishing opposite and contrary purposes. The intention of the Jews was sufficiently obvious—it was to destroy Christ and his religion together. "If we put him to death," they reasoned, "we prove that he is not the Messiah, and the people cannot then believe on him—with him, his doctrine and his followers will perish also." Thus they took counsel together against the Lord and against his Christ. In part they accomplished their purpose, and seemed fully to have accomplished it. They did put him to death. His disciples forsook him and went to their own homes. Doubtless the priests and elders went from the cross congratulating themselves on the success of their attempt against his life and against his religion. Ah, the blindness of man! "The counsel of the Lord standeth sure." "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." Christ, it is true, was put to death by wicked men; but in this they only accomplished "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."†

"What the creature will do, is known beforehand with a perfect prescience; and what God has determined to do in consequence, is made apparent by what he actually does, which is with him no new, no sudden thought, but known and purposed from eternity in view of the actual circumstances."‡

* Sermon on Ezekiel's Vision.
† Sermon on the Final Hour of Christ.
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.

"He who is allowed to be the First Cause, and the principle of motion in every created being; He who communicated and determined their respective powers and capacities, must of course have reserved to himself the superior power, the privilege or prerogative of suspending, diverting, or in any way overruling their agency; so as may best serve his wise purposes, which can never be served at all unless we suppose all events to be under his inspection, and all councils to be subject to his pleasure."*

The Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church does not express the Calvinistic doctrine of the divine decrees more unequivocally than these divines have done, when it says,

"The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his own will, whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass."

It has already been shown that Calvinists make a distinction between the positive and permissive decrees of God. We will now show that such a distinction is recognized by the Methodists also. Thus Mr. Wesley, in an attempt to show that we derive great advantages from the fall of man (although in so doing, he walks by sight, where Calvinists walk by faith only) says,

"Unless in Adam all had died, every child of man must have personally answered for himself to God." And he asks, "Who would wish to hazard a whole eternity upon one stake? Is it not infinitely more desirable to be in a state wherein, though encompassed with infirmities, we do not run such a desperate risk, but if we fall we may rise again?" "Where then is the man that presumes to blame God for not pre-

* Germs of Thought, pp. 76, 77. First American from the first London edition. Published and sold by N. Bangs & T. Mason, for the Methodist Episcopal Church. 1821.

venting Adam's sin? Should we not rather bless him from the ground of the heart, for therein laying the grand scheme of man's redemption, and making way for that glorious manifestation of his wisdom, holiness, justice and mercy." "Although a thousand particulars of his judgments and of his ways are unsearchable to us, and past finding out, yet we may discern the general scheme running through time into eternity. According to the counsel of his own will, the plan he laid before the foundation of the world, he created the parent of mankind in his own image, and he permitted all men to be made sinners by the disobedience of this one man, that by the obedience of one, all, who receive the free gift, may be infinitely holier and happier to all eternity."*

Here we are taught that "all men were *permitted* to be made sinners by the disobedience of one, according to a plan laid before the foundation of the world," or, in other words, a permissive decree joined with "a most holy bounding," as the Confession of Faith says.

Dr. A. Clarke says, "All who have read the Scriptures with care, know well that God is frequently represented in them as doing what he only permits to be done."† "All power must originally emanate from God, hence, sin and Satan can neither exist or act, but as he wills or permits."‡

Rev. R. Watson says, "The decrees of God . . can only scripturally signify the determinations of his will in the government of the world he has made.

* Sermon on God's Love to Fallen Man. Here Mr. Wesley turns Hopkinsian, and teaches that "sin is the necessary means of the greatest good." We have heard of those who prayed that God would forgive them for the sin of Adam, but never before of one who thanked him for it, and "for therein laying the grand scheme of man's redemption," &c., since but for that sin we would not need redemption.

† Clarke's Theology, page 78. ‡ Ibid. page 71.

These determinations are plainly in Scripture referred to two classes, what he has himself determined to do, and what he has determined to permit to be done by free and accountable agents. He determined for instance, to create man, and he determined to permit his fall. He determined also the only method of dispensing pardon to the guilty, but he determined to permit men to reject it, and fall into the punishment of their offences. . . . . If man has not a real agency, that is, if there is a necessity above him so controlling his actions as to render it impossible they should be otherwise, he is in the hands of another, and not master of himself, and so his actions cease to be his own. A decree to permit involves no such consequences."* Again he says, "God is under no obligation of justice at once to interpose and check the evils to which the wickedness of man gives rise; but he suffers them on the contrary, to expend themselves, in all their injurious consequences, that men may be taught wisdom by a bitter experience."†

"He has permitted infidelity to display itself in its full character, for the warning and instruction of mankind." "This evil has been permitted to exhibit itself upon a large scale." "He who reigneth hath permitted it to exhibit the dreadful effects upon the happiness and interests of nations as well as of individuals, that it might appear that 'righteousness' only 'exalteth a nation' with durable prosperity."‡

Other quotations might be added, but let these suffice. They teach fully the doctrine of the Confession of Faith. We will show next, that the doctrine under consideration is a comforting doctrine.

Thus says Wesley, "A serious clergyman desired

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chapter xxviii.
† Sermon on the Reign of God. ‡ Ibid.

to know in what points we (Methodists) differed from the Church of England; I answered, to the best of my knowledge, in none. The doctrines we teach are the doctrines of the Church of England—indeed, the fundamental doctrines of the Church as clearly laid down both in her Prayers, Articles, and Homilies."*

From this it appears that the doctrinal views of Mr. Wesley and his followers differed in nothing from the doctrines of the Church of England. Now, as his biographer, the Rev. R. Watson, informs us, that in this statement Mr. Wesley "stated his doctrinal views in as clear a manner, though in a summary form, as at any period subsequently,"† it is only necessary to turn to Article XVII. of the Church of England (latter part) to learn how he was comforted by the doctrine of predestination.

"The godly consideration of predestination, and of our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things, as well, because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God."

From the life of Mrs. Hester Ann Rodgers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, published by the General Conference, we make the following extract.

"I am still kept in various trials. This day, the following letter was, as if sent of God to strengthen me. 'My dear sister, the trials which a gracious Providence sends, or permits, may be so many means of growing in grace; and particularly of increasing in faith, patience, and resignation. And are they

* Watson's Life of Wesley, pp. 76, 77. † Ibid.

not all chosen for us in infinite wisdom and goodness? So that we may well subscribe to these beautiful lines:

> 'With patient mind, thy course of duty run;
> God nothing does, or suffers to be done,
> But thou wouldst do thyself, if thou couldst see,
> The end of all events, as well as he.' "*

The trials which a gracious Providence sends or permits, include all the trials we are called to bear. But these, whether sent or permitted, are "all chosen for us in infinite wisdom and goodness." This is Calvinism to the core.

Again, "God nothing does, or suffers to be done." What "God does, and suffers to be done," embraces all that is done. Now, if the divine purposes embrace all this, they embrace everything.

Once more. The Rev. R. Watson, in his sermon on "The Vision of Ezekiel," after stating, as we have seen, that "The plans of God reach from the beginning to the end of time—pass the limits of time and issue in eternity;" and that "thus it has been from the foundation of the world; God subordinating everything to the counsel of his own will, has been making everything . . . to accomplish more fully and illustriously his great and glorious designs," says, "In all the dispensations of Divine Providence, whether as to nations or individuals, there is an end, a design; and to understand this is a great part of the practical knowledge of man. In the turnings and changings of this mighty providence of God, have your hopes been frustrated, and your plans blasted? The eyes are there; there is an end to which this movement looks, of instruction, admonition, and reproof—lessons deeply important for you

* Life of Mrs. Rodgers, page 54.

to learn. Have those turnings brought about some unexpected deliverance, some signal mercy? The eyes are there too; there is a reference to some great practical end, to quicken thy zeal, to rouse thy gratitude, and to make obedience the effect of an increasingly excited and strengthened devotion. . . . . Have these wheels driven over and crushed your comforts, and joys, and best earthly interests? Still are the eyes there. Perhaps the whole design has not been manifested, and there may be much of mystery yet; but thou art called by this dispensation from earth—thou art reminded that this is not thy rest, Have these wheels, instinct with divine wrath, turned on some careless sinful man, and swept him away in his wickedness? The eyes are there. This is a solemn and impressive warning to others, an admonition against delays," &c.

The comfort derived in all these cases is legitimate. It naturally results from the Calvinistic doctrine of the divine decrees. And if Methodists may derive it in such abundance, the decrees of God are not so "horrible" after all. Having shown that all for which Calvinists contend, in reference to positive and permissive predestination, is taught, endorsed, and published by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and great comfort derived therefrom, we will show next that the distinction between the positive and permissive decrees, is as directly and decidedly denied by Methodists.

Rev. Professor Alcinous Young of the Pittsburgh Conference says, "Decree to permit! sounds very strange indeed. Surely the Presbyterians must be very fond of the word decree. Where do they find this strange jumble of words? Decree to permit! It is surely not found in the Bible, unless they have a Bible different from mine. It is self-begotten, and

has jumped into the controversy to help the Calvinists."* Did Mr. Young never read Acts xiv. 16, Rom. i. 24–28, to say nothing of the writers of his own Church we have quoted?

The Rev. N. L. Bangs says, "How absurd is it for men who so pertinaciously contend for this doctrine" (of positive decrees) "as the fundamental principle of their system, to amuse their readers by talking about the permission of sin. Are they secretly disgusted with their own scheme, and the proper terms they have used to convey appropriate ideas of it, and therefore have invented others, because more soft? . . . . If they mean by permission, that God gave a formal permit, for instance, to Adam and Eve to commit sin, and through them to all others, and then left them entirely to their own agency, and the influence of the serpent, why not speak plain and let us understand their meaning."†

Dr. Fisk says, "We protest in the name of all that is pure in language, in the name of all that is important in the sentiment conveyed by language, against such an abuse of terms. . . . Do the words predestinate, or foreordain, or decree, mean in common language, or even in their radical and critical definition, nothing more than permit—not absolutely to hinder—to submit to as an unavoidable but offensive evil?"‡

Here then we have the Arminianism of the Rev. N L. Bangs, Professor Young, President Fisk, and the General Conference, arrayed against the Calvinism of Wesley, Mrs. Rodgers, Watson, the General Conference, and the Bible. But again, notwithstanding the unchangeableness of God's purposes is admitted, as

* Marriage Dinner, page 19.
† Reply to Haskel, pp. 20, 21.
‡ Calvinistic Controversy, No. I.

we have seen, it is contended that he does sometimes change them. Thus says the Rev. R. Watson:

"We have instances of the revocation of God's decrees, as well as of their conditional character, one of which will be sufficient for illustration. In the case of Eli, 'I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy seed, should walk before me for ever; but now saith the Lord, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.' No passage can more strongly refute the Calvinistic notion of God's immutability, which they seem to place in his never changing his *purpose*, whereas in fact the scriptural doctrine is, that it consists in his never changing the principles of his administration."*

Although we could easily make it appear that "no passage" less "strongly refutes the Calvinistic notion of God's immutability" than this, the only one here adduced, yet as there are others much stronger, and which are confidently relied on, we will state them ourselves, and then reply to the whole.

God said to Hezekiah, "Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live." But on the repentance of the king, he said, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold I will add unto thy days fifteen years."†

Again, he said to the Ninevites by the prophet Jonah, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." But on the repentance of the Ninevites, Nineveh was not overthrown.‡ The question now arises, Did God really change his "purposes" in any of these cases? Methodists themselves shall answer the question.

We have already seen that "he is in all respects a

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.

† Isaiah xxxviii. 1—5. ‡ Jonah iii.

most perfect being," so that "we cannot but believe that in his will and purposes (or decrees) he must of necessity be unchangeable." "An omniscient being, who knowing all things, has no reason to act contrary to his first resolves." If then "what the house of Eli, Hezekiah and the Ninevites" would do, was known beforehand with a perfect prescience, and what God determined to do in consequence, is made known by what he actually did, and which is with him no new, no sudden thought, but known and purposed from eternity in view of the actual circumstances,"* to us it is evident that "the scriptural doctrine of God's immutability consists in his never changing" either "the principles" or purposes "of his administration."

We have now shown that the Calvinistic doctrine of the divine decrees, though admitted and denied in the Methodist Church, is true. We have seen also that the Calvinistic distinction between the positive and permissive decrees of God, though admitted and denied in the same Church, is true also. The great Robert Hall has, therefore, well remarked, that "If any man says he is a decided Arminian, the inference is, that he is not a good logician."†

CHAPTER IX.

THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.

On the subject of this chapter, Calvinists have long been divided into what are called Supralapsarian, and Sublapsarian. Of these, the former (who have never been more than a very small fraction) suppose

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.
† Works, Vol. iii. page 35.

that in the decree of election, God regarded the human family without any reference to their fall and sinfulness. The latter maintain that he contemplated them as fallen in Adam, and totally depraved; "by nature the children of wrath,"* and under sentence of "condemnation."† That in view of this "he did not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the covenant of works;"‡ "but according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel of his will, he hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace."§

On these points the mind of Calvin does not appear to have been entirely settled; consequently, he wrote sometimes as a Supralapsarian, and, at others, as a Sublapsarian. And hence his assailants quote him when he wrote as the former, and his defenders quote him when he wrote as the latter. The Presbyterian Board of Publication, therefore, in giving to the public a new edition of his Institutes, say expressly that "some of his expressions in reference to the doctrine of reprobation, may be regarded as too unqualified," and that "we do not wish to be regarded as adopting all the sentiments and forms of expression of the venerated writer."‖

All who adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church, are Sublapsarian.

* Ephesians ii. 3. † Rom. v. 16, 18.

‡ Larger Catechism, Question 30.

§ Confession of Faith, Chap. iii. Sec. v.

‖ See advertisement to the edition of Calvin's Institutes by the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

This is true also of the Calvinists we are about to notice.

Mr. Wesley, speaking of God, says, "According to the counsel of his own will, the plan he laid before the foundation of the world, he created the parent of all mankind in his own image, and he permitted all men to be made sinners by the disobedience of this one man, that by the obedience of one, all who receive the free gift may be infinitely holier and happier to all eternity."*

Mr. Wesley here teaches distinctly that the plan of man's salvation was laid before the foundation of the world, in view of the fall.

Dr. Fisk says, "None of us deny but that Jesus Christ was delivered up to suffer and die, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."† Again he says, "As God foresaw they (Adam and Eve) would sin, he also determined upon the plan he would pursue in reference to them as sinners."‡ In other words, the plan of salvation.

Evidently then, "the determinate counsel" under which "Jesus Christ was delivered up to suffer and die" was formed before man had sinned, or as the Apostle Peter expresses it, "before the foundation of the world;"§ and so, in view of man, as fallen.

The Rev. R. Watson says, "The great plan of redeeming mercy was formed in eternity; there infinite wisdom arranged and infinite love cherished it. The world was framed for its manifestations, but the times and the seasons were reserved by the Father in his own power."‖

Again he says, "The redemption of man by Christ was not certainly an after thought, brought in upon

* Sermon on God's Love to Fallen Man.
† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon. ‡ Ibid. No. I.
§ 1 Peter i. 20. ‖ Sermon on the Cherubim and Mercy Seat.

man's apostasy. It was a provision, and when man fell, he found justice hand in hand with mercy."*

We have now seen that "all are born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and that all sin deserves eternal misery"† — that "the law inflicts the penalty of death upon every act of disobedience—that all men have come under that penalty,"‡ and that "all moral depravity derived or contracted, is damning in its nature"§—that "there was nothing in all the character and circumstances of the fallen family, except their sin and deserved misery, that could claim the interposition of God's saving power;" and "that it was pure unmerited love that induced God to provide salvation for our world."‖

If then "man has forfeited good of every kind and even life itself by his transgressions,"** it follows that Mr. Watson is correct when he says, "God has a right to select whom he pleases to enjoy special privileges"—that "in this there is no unrighteousness."†† And that Dr. Clarke is correct also when he says, he "dispenses his benefits, where, when and to whom he pleases; (and) no person can complain of his conduct in these respects, because no person deserves any good from his hands."‡‡

Mr. Wesley says accordingly, "With regard to unconditional election I believe that God, before the foundation of the world, did unconditionally elect certain persons to do certain works, as Paul to preach the gospel; that he has unconditionally elected some nations to hear the gospel, as England and Scotland now, and many others in past ages: that he has un-

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 246.
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.
§ Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon. ‖ Ibid.
** Theol. Inst. Part II. Chap. xxiii. †† Ibid. Chap. xxvi.
‡‡ Clarke's Theology, page 76.

conditionally elected some persons to many peculiar advantages, both with regard to temporal and spiritual things; and I do not deny, though I cannot prove it so, that he has unconditionally elected some persons to eternal glory."*

We have seen already that Mr. Wesley and the Methodists of his day "differed in nothing from the doctrines of the Church of England, as clearly laid down in her Prayers, Articles and Homilies."† It is only necessary therefore to quote a part of Article XVII. of that Church to ascertain what were their views in reference to the doctrine of election.

"Predestination to eternal life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation, those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ, to everlasting salvation, as vessels of mercy."

No Calvinistic writer or formulary ever stated the doctrine more distinctly and unequivocally.

The Rev. R. Watson and the General Conference are about as explicit. Speaking of the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans they say, "We have in it several instances of unconditional election. Such was that of the descendants of Isaac to be God's visible Church, in preference to those of Ishmael. Such was that of Jacob to the exclusion of Esau, which election was declared when the children were yet in the womb, before they had done good or evil, so that the blessing of the special covenant did not descend upon the posterity of Jacob because of any righteousness in their progenitor. In like manner when Almighty God determined no longer to found his visible

* Works, Vol. iii. page 289.

† Watson's Life of Wesley, pages 76, 77.

Church upon natural descent, from Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob, nor in any line according to the flesh, but to make faith in his Son Jesus Christ the gate of admission into this privilege, he acted according to the same sovereign pleasure. . . . . A man of Macedonia appears to Paul in a vision by night, and cries, 'Come over into Macedonia and help us.' But we have no reason to believe that the Macedonians were better than other gentiles, although they were elected to the privileges and advantages of evangelical ordinances. So in modern times, parts of Hindostan have been elected to receive the gospel, and yet its inhabitants presented nothing more worthy of this election than the people of Thibet or California, who have not yet been elected."*

Again they say, "Of a divine election, or choosing and separating from others, we have three kinds mentioned in the Scriptures:

"The first is the election of individuals to perform some particular and special service," &c.

"The second is the election of nations, or bodies of people to eminent religious privileges, in order to accomplish by their superior illumination the merciful purposes of God, in benefitting other nations or bodies of people," &c.

"The third kind of election is personal election; or the election of individuals to be the children of God and the heirs of eternal life."†

But if they are elected "to be the children of God," their election must precede their regeneration, and if so, they are not elected conditionally, or because they are the children of God. This, it is proper to remark, is all for which Calvinists contend.

Again they say, "The phrases 'eternal election,' and 'eternal decree of election,' so often on the lips

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi. † Ibid.

of the Calvinists, can in common sense mean only an eternal purpose to elect, or a purpose formed in eternity to elect or choose out of the world and sanctify in time, by the Spirit and blood of Jesus. This is a doctrine no one will contend with them."*

Here then the dispute closes. For if any one will show the difference between "an eternal purpose to choose out of the world and sanctify," and the eternal choice of those individuals to sanctification, he shall be "Magnus Apollo." Arminians without exception contend, that election is not unto, but after sanctification. Here, however, that point is given up and the Calvinistic view admitted by the most prominent Arminian authorities. Having now shown that the Calvinistic doctrine of election of the Presbyterian Church, is as distinctly taught in the Methodist Church as it is in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, we will proceed to show,

I. That this doctrine is stamped on the face of nature. This appears

1. In the peculiar advantages of country, government, &c., which some enjoy.

The people of the United States do certainly possess a country which in point of excellence has not an equal, and a government which in point of wisdom is without a parallel. As a people, we enjoy a degree of prosperity and happiness the most astonishing. But who stretched out these valleys, and reared these mountains, and coursed these beautiful rivers? Who gave fertility to our soil, variety and abundance to our productions, value to our minerals, health to our climate, and happiness to our people, for each of which particulars this country is so remarkable? Is the government under which we live, the work of the present generation? But above all, who arranged it that this

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chapter xxvi.

blest land should be the place of our birth? Was it not He that "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations?"*

2. In parentage, ancestry, &c.

That distinguished parentage is a privilege, need not be proved. But who is the giver of parents, or so arranges the circumstances in which we are born that wealth and honour are the birthright of some, while poverty and disgrace are the birthright of others? Who arranged it that while one is born a savage, or a slave, or both united, another is born to freedom and civilization? Who arranged it that some are born of parents so pious, and in circumstances so favourable, that everything around them tends to fit them for distinction and piety in time, and happiness in eternity, while others are born of parents so wicked, and in circumstances of such ignorance and wickedness, that the whole tendency of their experience is to bring the "iniquities of the fathers upon the children?"

3. Superior health, strength, beauty, &c., are the result of the same divine arrangement.

That health and strength are blessings we cannot but value, and beauty a grace we cannot but admire, requires no argument. But who so arranged it that some from infancy should be so feeble, that no matter with what care they live, they eat their bread in sorrow, while others have such vigour, that no matter how prodigal of health, they scarce know pain or sickness? Who arranged it that some should be so deformed that life is scarce a blessing, while others are so fair, we scarcely think them human? Who arranged it that some should be born with all the senses, while

* Acts xvii. 26.

others are without sight or hearing? May it not be said, as Christ has said, that "neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, that he should be born blind, but that the works of God should be manifest in him?"*

4. A similar providential arrangement appears in the various degrees of intellect among the human family. For while the minds of some are so feeble that accountability is doubtful, the minds of others are so amazing we almost deify them. And though much may be done to develope what is excellent in all, it is just as impossible to put them on an equality as it would be to give to iron the lustre of silver, or to copper the value of gold.

5. The same discrimination appears throughout living nature. It appears in the different grades of animals, from the insect so small as scarcely to be visible, to the huge mastodon, under whose majestic tread the earth was made to tremble. It is seen in the different size, appearance and dispositions of animals of the same species, and among the holy beings around the throne of God there are cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels.

Now why was not man endowed with mind and glory such as Gabriel hath? But why again, is man superior to the brute? Not more certainly is there "one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, and that one star differeth from another star in glory," than that God made the difference.

6. God shows the same distinguishing sovereignty in giving to some a longer term of natural life than to others.

"Within a day, a month, or a year after accountability commences, some are hurried to their final

* John iii. 9.

doom. Others are spared amid the means of grace for eighty years, and then brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. One day to some, a few days to others, and ten or twenty thousand days to others."*

II. Having seen what a vast difference there is in nature, let us see whether there is not a similar difference in grace also. This appears

1. In having provided salvation for some only, of the fallen.

> The rebel angels once stood high as Gabriel
> Stands; but, being lifted up with pride, they
> Fell to hopeless depths of woe. Man once in
> Eden dwelt in innocence, and talked
> With God. But presuming to be wise above
> Himself, he sinned and fell, and awful
> Was the fall.

But mark the difference. For fallen man a Saviour is provided, and at a cost an angel cannot calculate, yet no salvation was ever provided for fallen angels. The Son of God took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham.†

> "The Saviour did not join,
> Their nature to his own;
> For them he shed no blood divine,
> Nor heaved a single groan."

"What a world of vain imagination is swept away by this single fact, and how it sweeps away the whole ground-work of the supposition that God treats all the guilty alike."‡

2. God exercised a similar sovereignty in making the Jews only, for many ages, the repositories of his word.

There were the Egyptians, famed for their wisdom; the Chaldeans and Assyrians, wise, great and pow-

* Dr. Ruffner † Heb. ii. 16. ‡ Dr. Ruffner.

erful; the Persians, who, by their strength and policy almost subdued the world. There were the Grecks and Romans, the extent of whose dominions, the fame of whose power, and the excellence of whose government had no equal in ancient times. Yet God passed these by, but "made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel." Psalm ciii. 7.

It was in view of this that Moses said, "The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth;"* and that David said, "Thou hast not dealt so with any nation;" and that the Apostle Paul, in answer to the interrogatory, "What advantage hath the Jew, and what profit is there in circumcision?" said, "Much every way, but chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Rom. iii. 1, 2. Now these advantages were not conferred on the Jews because they were distinguished as a nation. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people."† Neither was it on account of their greater righteousness. "Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness, for thou art a stiff-necked people."‡

III. The same distinguishing sovereignty is asserted again and again in the New Testament.

1. In the bestowment of temporal favours.

Thus, our Saviour, preaching in the synagogue of Nazareth, said, "I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heavens were shut up, three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land, but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a

* Deut. xiv. 2. † Deut. vii. 7. ‡ Deut. ix. 6.

city of Sidon, to a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, but Naaman the Syrian."*

Here we see the "widows of Israel" neglected, while the wants of one of the doomed Canaanites were supplied; and the lepers of Israel passed by, while "Naaman the Syrian was cleansed." It is worthy of remark also, that when the doctrine under discussion was preached by our Saviour himself, it awakened as decided opposition as at any time since. For it is immediately added, "And all they of the synagogue when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong." It is a great mistake, therefore, in any one to date Arminianism back no farther than to James Arminius.

2. In the spread of the gospel among different nations.

This is admitted, as we have seen. But why was not the gospel sent to all, as much as to those to whom it has been sent? "Were we better than they? No, in no wise, for we are all under sin." Rom. iii. 9.

3. In the bestowment of converting grace.

Passing by millions of infants, God sanctified Jeremiah and John the Baptist from the womb.† Passing by millions of other children equally as good by nature, he regenerated Samuel and Timothy, probably in childhood.‡ Passing by a whole company of females, he so "opened the heart of Lydia that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul."§

* Luke iv. 25—27.
† Jeremiah i. 5; Luke i. 15.
‡ 1 Sam. i. 28; ii. 21, 26.
§ Acts xvi. 14.

Passing by a whole band of persecutors, he made Saul of Tarsus, their infuriated leader, a "vessel of mercy."*

In reference to this last, the Rev. R. Watson says, "Can a man be conceived to be further from Christianity than Saul, the moment prior to his reception of it? Then was he nearest the very gate of hell, when just about to enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven. What a state is that which the historian describes! 'Then Saul, breathing out threatenings and slaughter.' His heart was hot within him—it burned with rancour and cruelty—his breath was flame—imprecations and threats were vomited from that heart through that mouth—the volcano of his breast heaved and swelled and poured its streams of fire on every side. A hotter brand surely was never quenched in the blood of the Saviour. . . . All the softer feelings, like doves in a tempest, scared and scattered by the rage and uproar of his malignant passions, shrank into the recesses of his soul, nor dared to interpose and look out. Only a miracle could reclaim such a man. That such a man was converted is, itself, proof of a miracle."†

And so in thousands of cases where the more guilty are taken, and the less guilty are left. "Here for example, is a profligate wretch, so long accustomed to sin, that his heart is hard, like the nether millstone. His conscience is so seared, that his depravity ferments within him. For some reason, he scarce knows what, he has come to the house of God, perhaps to mock at sacred things. In a little while his attention becomes fixed on the minister. Next, the tears begin to flow. But why is this? Nothing very special has been said. Those around him are unmoved. The congregation is dismissed, and the people retire as

* Acts ix. † Sermon on the Conversion of Saul.

usual, but he goes away with his head hanging down. His companions notice this, and inquire the cause. He, in reply, tries to drive away his feelings; but the very effort seems to cause the truth to wound more deeply, like a barbed arrow in a flying deer. His guilt at length becomes so great a burden that he cries to God for mercy, seeks what he lately shunned, and finds that peace which is essential to the new-born soul."* This, we admit, is not an ordinary case, for it is not usual for the more thoughtless to be taken, while the more thoughtful are left, but they sometimes are, and are converted in a moment. Others are more gradually drawn by a more gentle influence. Others resist their impressions, but in vain. Others get rid of them for a time, but again they return, until "He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines into their hearts to give them the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Some, on the other hand, "although they may be called by the ministry of the word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come to Christ."† Others are powerfully awakened, but soon lose their impressions for ever. Now "all this worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."‡

4. This accords with the experience of the people of God. If we ask pious people of any denomination of Christians to tell their experience, they will give substantially the same account. One will say, "I led a very thoughtless life, and though often urged to attend to the subject of religion, I made excuse, until I was led to hear a sermon I shall never forget. The Lord sent it home to my heart with such power, that I could find no peace until I found it in believing."

* Dr. Ruffner.

† Confession of Faith, Chap. X. Sec iv.

‡ Cor. xii. 11.

Another will say, "I was living without God, my heart being set supremely on the world, and such I am sure I should have remained to this day, but for the interposition of redeeming mercy and sovereign grace. God called me by the voice of affliction, and though at first I heeded not, he still followed me with one affliction after another, until I was constrained to render to him my whole heart."

A third will say, "There is nothing very special in my case. I led a very careless life until I was brought to reflect on how I had neglected my soul, and while thus reflecting, I secretly resolved to seek salvation by the use of the appointed means. The more I read and heard and prayed, the more I became impressed with my sinfulness and danger, and the importance of eternal things, until through great mercy I was led to cast myself entirely on the helpless sinner's friend."*

"He rescued me from sin and hell,
And by his power my foes controlled;
He saw me wandering far from God,
And brought me to his chosen fold."

"You have objections to the doctrine of election," said the Rev. John Newton, writing to a friend; "you will admit, however, that the Scriptures do speak of it, especially Paul, and that, too, in terms very strong and expressive. I have met with some sincere people who told me they could not bear to read the eighth and ninth chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, but always passed them over. So that their aversion to the doctrine prejudiced them against the Scriptures also. But why so, unless because the dreaded doctrine is maintained there too plainly to be evaded?† You

* These cases, with slight changes, are taken from Fairchild's "Great Supper."

† Whitefield, writing to Mr. Wesley, says, "Honoured sir, how

will say, however, that some writers and teachers attempt to put an easier sense upon the Apostle's words. Let us judge then, as I lately proposed, from experience. Admitting what I am sure you will admit, the total depravity of human nature, how are we to account for the conversion of a soul to God unless we admit an election of grace? The work must begin somewhere. Either the sinner first seeks the Lord, or the Lord first seeks the sinner. If the God of this world has blinded our eyes, and maintains possession of our hearts—if the carnal mind, so far from being disposed to seek God, is enmity against him, God may seek the sinner, but the unawakened sinner never seeks God. Let me appeal to yourself. I think you know yourself too well to say you either sought or loved the Lord first. Perhaps you are conscious that for a season, and so far as in you lay, you even resisted his call, and must have perished if he had not made you willing in the day of his power, and saved you from yourself. In your own case, therefore, you acknowledge he began with you, and it must be so with all who are saved, if the whole race are by nature at enmity with God. Then further, there must be an election unless all are called. But we are assured that the broad road which is thronged with the greatest multitudes leads to destruction. Were not you and I in that road? Were we better than those who continue in it still? What but grace made us to differ from our former selves? What but grace made

could it enter into your heart to choose a text to disprove the doctrine of election out of the eighth of Romans; where this doctrine is so plainly asserted, that once talking with a Quaker on this subject, he had no other way of evading the force of the Apostle's assertion than by saying, 'I believe Paul was in the wrong.' And another friend lately, who was once highly prejudiced against election, ingenuously confessed he used to think St. Paul himself was mistaken, or that he was not truly translated." Gillies' Life of Whitefield, page 629.

us to differ from those who are now as we once were? Then this grace by the very terms must be distinguishing, or in other words, electing grace. And to suppose that God should make his choice at the time of our calling, is not only unscriptural, but contrary to the dictates of reason, and the ideas we have of the divine perfections."

This brings us to show

IV. That the teaching of Messrs. Wesley, Watson and the General Conference, as already given, is scriptural also. This appears from the fact, that in the Scriptures the people of God are represented as chosen *to* salvation and eternal life;—*to* know the will of God:—*to* holiness—*to* obedience—*to* faith, and *to be conformed* to the image of Christ.

Thus Paul, addressing the Thessalonians, says, "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he hath called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The Rev. R. Watson, commenting on this passage, says, "The beginning here refers to the very first reception of the gospel in Thessalonica," and, he argues that these Thessalonians were then converted, and, then chosen, &c.† But, if this be so, then it follows that they were all converted about the same time, which is very improbable. Again, the interpretation of Mr. Watson is in conflict with Rev. xvii. 8: "They that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." This teaches,

1. That the names of some are "in the book of

* 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.

† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxv.

life." 2. That they were written there from the foundation of the world. Evidently then, when Paul said to the Thessalonian Christians, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation," he refers to the same period to which the Second Person of the Trinity refers when he says, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way;"* and to which the Apostle John refers when speaking of Christ, he says, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."† The passage thus explained, teaches, 1. That the people of God are chosen. There is election. 2. That they were "chosen from the beginning." There is the eternity of their election. 3. That they were "chosen to salvation." There is the end of their election. 4. "Through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." There is the holiness and faith that follow election. 5. "Whereunto he hath called you by our gospel." There is the appointed means to bring the people of God to the salvation to which they have been "chosen."

Again, Luke speaking of the success that followed the ministry of Paul at Corinth, says, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts xiii. 48.

This teaches, 1. That some are "ordained to eternal life." There is an election of grace. 2. That their "ordination to eternal life" preceded their faith, and so was not conditional; that is, on account of it. 3. That all who are ordained to eternal life believe. Again, Ananias, addressing the awakened Saul, says, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldst know his will," &c. Acts xxii. 14.

This teaches that the people of God are "chosen to know his will." Of course then they must have been

* Proverbs viii. 22. † John i. 1—3.

chosen before they do know his will. Then it follows that their election is before their conversion, and so not conditional, or on account of it.

Again, Eph. i. 4, 5—"According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children unto himself by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will."

If then the people of God were "chosen before the foundation of the world that they should be holy," their election is before their holiness, and so, is not conditional, or, on account of their holiness.

Again, if they are "predestinated to the adoption of children," they must have been so predestinated before they are children, so that they could not have been "predestinated to the adoption of children," because they were children.

Again, 1 Peter i. 1, 2—"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

If then the people of God are "elected unto obedience," their election must be before their obedience, and consequently before their sanctification also, because no sanctified person can be a disobedient person.

Again, Rom. viii. 29—"For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." If then, some have been predestinated to that blessing, they must have been so predestinated before they obtain it.

We have now seen that the people of God were eternally "chosen to salvation," "to know his will," "that they should be holy," "unto obedience"—"or-

dained to eternal life"—"predestinated unto the adoption of children"—"to be conformed to the image of Christ," and consequently, to faith, for no one can possess these graces without faith. If then they were chosen to these graces, the choice could not have been made because they were foreseen to possess them. Accordingly, Paul tells us that "when Rebecca had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." Rom. ix. 11.

From this we learn, 1. That certain special favours were intended for Jacob such as were not intended for Esau.

2. That these favours were not bestowed on Jacob conditionally, that is, on account of superior merit, for he was not yet born, neither had he done either good or evil. But

3. "That the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." We find, accordingly, that piety commenced with Jacob, nor has it ever entirely left his posterity. From him were descended most of the prophets, all of the Apostles, and our Saviour himself. To his posterity were committed the "Oracles of God," and through them they have been handed down to us. And though "blindness in part hath happened unto Israel until the fulness of the gentiles be come in, all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come forth of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Rom. ix. 10, 11.

With Esau, on the contrary, extreme wickedness commenced, and extreme wickedness was a prominent characteristic of his posterity. And though, as a na-

tion, they became great and powerful, ages long since they have been blotted out from under heaven. How wonderful are the ways of Providence, and how forcible is the language of the Scriptures, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast: for we are his workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*

We have now seen that the Calvinistic doctrine of personal unconditional election, as taught by Mr. Wesley and the Methodists of his day, and as since taught by Mr. Watson and the General Conference, is sustained by reason, by fact, by the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, and the Bible. But as the Methodist Episcopal Church maintains two sides at least of every question in dispute between them and Calvinists, we will show next what they teach on this subject as Arminians.

As Calvinists, they teach, as we have seen, that election is eternal, personal, and unconditional. But as Arminians, they teach, on the contrary, that it is an election in time, of character, and conditional. Thus Mr. Wesley and the General Conference say, "Faith in Christ producing obedience to him, is a cause, without which God elects none unto glory."† Mr. Watson and the General Conference say, "Personal election is conditional. It rests, as we have seen, upon personal repentance and justifying faith."‡ "To choose men to salvation considered as believers,

* Eph. ii. 8, 9, 10; 2 Tim. i. 9.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 140.
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chapter xxvi.

gives a reason for election which not only manifests the wisdom of God, but has the advantage of being entirely consistent with his own published and express decree: 'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.' . . . . The choice not being of certain men as such, but of all persons believing."*

Dr. Fisk and the General Conference say, "God did decree from the beginning, to elect, or choose in Christ, all that should believe, to salvation."† "We do not say we believe because we are elected, but we are elected because we believe."‡ "Ours is an election of character, and so far as it relates to individuals, it relates to them only as they are foreseen to possess that character."§

To this we reply, that these divines completely refute themselves by teaching that faith and repentance are the gifts of God. Thus, Mr. Watson and the General Conference, after describing saving repentance, say, "Such is the corrupt state of man that he is incapable of repentance of this kind. . . To suppose man to be capable of a repentance which is the result of a genuine principle, is to assume human nature to be what it is not. For if man be totally corrupt, the only principles from which that repentance and correction of manners which are supposed in the argument can flow, do not exist in his nature.‖

Mr. Wesley says, "Repentance flows from love to God, and hatred to sin," . . and he asks, "Is it possible for a heart totally depraved, dead in trespasses and sins, to exercise such repentance?"¶

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
‡ Christian Advocate and Journal, Feb. 19th, 1852.
§ Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
‖ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xix.
¶ Sermon on the New Birth.

Here then, we are distinctly taught that man is so corrupt as to be incapable of evangelical or saving repentance—that such repentance, being the result of a genuine principle which does not exist in human nature, is therefore the gift of God. This, then, is one of the conditions of election, according to Arminians; take the other.

"Boasting of our faith," say Mr. Watson and the General Conference, "is cut off by the consideration that it is the gift of God."*

Mr. Wesley says, "Of yourselves cometh neither your faith nor your salvation. It is the gift of God—the free undeserved gift—the faith through which ye are saved."† Again, he says, "The true living Christian faith, which whosoever hath is born of God, is not only an assent, or act of the understanding, but a disposition which God hath wrought in his heart."‡ Again he asks, "Why have not all men this faith?" and answers, "Because no man is able to work it in himself. It is the work of Omnipotence—it requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul than to raise a dead body that lies in the grave—it is a new creation, and none can create a soul anew but He who at first created the heavens and the earth,"§ &c.

If then, "Election is an election of character, and so far as it relates to individuals, relates to them only as they are seen to possess that character"—"conditional, resting upon personal repentance and justifying faith," and these graces which constitute the character, are themselves the gifts of God; then, unless he gives them to all, it follows that he must have selected those to whom he gives them. This,

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.
† Sermon on Salvation by Faith.
‡ Sermon on The Marks of the New Birth.
§ Southey's Life of Wesley, Vol. II. page 82.

however, is the personal unconditional election of the Calvinists: so that, although these divines shift their ground, they do not escape the difficulty. But, says Mr. Wesley and the General Conference, "Believing is the gift of the God of grace, as breathing, moving, and eating are the gifts of the God of nature. He gives me lungs and air, that I may breathe; he gives me life and muscles, that I may move; he bestows upon me food and a mouth, that I may eat; and when I have no stomach, he gives me common sense to see I must die, or force myself to take some nourishment or some medicine; but he neither breathes, moves, nor eats for me; nay, when I think proper I can accelerate my breathing, motion, and eating; and if I please I may even fast, lie down, or hang myself, and by that means put an end to my eating, moving, and breathing."

"Again, faith is the gift of God to believers as sight is to you. The parent of good freely gives you the light of the sun, and organs proper to receive it. He places you in a world, where the light visits you daily; he apprizes you that sight is conducive to your safety, pleasure, and profit; and everything around you bids you use your eyes and see: nevertheless, you may not only drop your curtains, and extinguish your candle, but close your eyes also. This is exactly the case with regard to faith."* But if this be so, then it follows that unbelief, atheism, blasphemy, theft, lying, Sabbath-breaking, adultery, murder, &c., are in the same sense the gifts of God, as faith and repentance are, since the powers by which these things are done, are as much the gifts of God, as those by which, according to Arminians, a man repents and believes.

This, indeed, is very little like Mr. Wesley, who,

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 235, 236.

when speaking of a sinner "made sensible of his lost estate," said, "He knows himself to be dead while he liveth, dead to God, having no more power to perform the actions of a living Christian, than a dead body to perform the functions of a living man."* Very little like Mr. Wesley, when he asks, "Can you give yourself this faith? Is it in your power to see, or hear, or taste, or feel God?—to raise in yourself any perception of God, or of an invisible world?—to open up an intercourse between yourself and the world of spirits?—to discern either them, or him that created them?—to burst the veil that is on your heart, and let in the light of eternity? You know it is not. You not only do not, but cannot (by your own strength) thus believe. The more you labour so to do, the more you will be convinced it is the gift of God . which he bestows . . on those who, till that hour, were fit only for everlasting destruction."† And very little like Mr. Watson and the General Conference, when they say, "Men having become totally corrupt, are not capable of obedience in future."‡

But, says Mr. Watson, "What true personal election is, we shall find explained in two clear passages of Scripture. It is explained negatively by our Lord, when he says to his disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world." It is explained positively by St. Peter when he addresses his first epistle to the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

"To be elected therefore, is to be separated from 'the world,' and to be sanctified by the Spirit, and

* Sermon on the Way of Salvation.
† Southey's Life of Wesley, Vol. II. page 82.
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.

by the blood of Christ. It follows then, that election is not only an act of God, done in time, but also that it is subsequent to the administration of the means of salvation. The 'calling' goes before the 'election;' the publication of the doctrine of 'the Spirit,' and the atonement, called by Peter, the 'sprinkling of the blood of Christ,' before that 'sanctification,' through which they become the 'elect' of God."*

To this we reply; if the elect are sanctified before they are elected, then it follows, that they must obey before they are elected, for no sanctified adult can be disobedient. But according to the Scriptures, it is to these graces they are elected. While, however, Paul says, "chosen that we should be holy;"† and Peter says, "elect unto obedience,"‡ Mr. Watson says, Holy, that we may be chosen, and obedient, that we may be elected. And while David says, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causest to approach unto thee,"§ Mr. Watson would say, Blessed is the man who approaches unto thee, that he may be chosen. And when Ananias said to Paul, "The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will,"‖ Mr. Watson would have said, The God of our Fathers will choose thee after thou hast known his will. And when Paul says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy,"** Mr. Watson says, "An act of God done in time, subsequent to the administration of the means of salvation."

While therefore, according to Arminians, election takes place after the subjects of it are "holy"—after they believe—after they "know the will of God"—

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi. † Eph. i. 4.
‡ 1 Peter i. 2. § Psalm lxv. 4. ‖ Acts xxii. 14. ** Eph. i. 4.

after "obedience"—after they "approach unto God" —after they are "adopted as children"—after they are "conformed to the image of Christ," &c., Calvinistic election and the election of the Bible is "to holiness," to faith, "to approach unto God," "to know his will," "to obedience" "unto the adoption of children," &c.

Let us now hear Paul: "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ,"* "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will."†

CHAPTER X.

THE ATONEMENT.

THE nature and extent of the Atonement are necessarily involved in a discussion of the doctrine of election. This is seen and felt by Arminians, and hence there is no point in the whole Calvinistic controversy on which they lay so much stress. But notwithstanding they have here laid out all their strength, if we are not greatly mistaken, we shall find their inconsistency by no means trifling.

* Eph. ii. 4—7. † Ibid. i. 5.

In the Articles of Religion and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we have the following definition of the Atonement, viz:

"The offering of Christ once made, is a perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual, and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone."*

Is this definition correct? If it is, why should any of the human family be finally lost? Will any of those who are "bold to affirm that justice and equity in God are what they are taken to be among reasonable men,"† tell us how "it is possible to reconcile it to any notion of just government that has ever obtained"‡ to send men to hell, when "for all their sins, both original and actual, a perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction has been made?" "The bare statement of such an idea is enough to chill one's blood."§

Now that such a consequence does follow the doctrine we have just stated, is admitted. Thus says the Rev. N. L. Bangs, "The law of God being completely satisfied by the obedience of Christ unto death, it can have no just demand upon those for whom satisfaction was made. And if the law has no demand, there can be no condemnation."‖

But, says the Rev. R. Watson, "As to a future state, eternal life is promised to all men believing in Christ, which reverses the sentence of eternal death. . Should this be rejected, he (the sinner) stands liable to the whole penalty, to the punishment of loss, as to the natural consequences of his corrupted nature, which renders him unfit for heaven; to the punishment of even pain for the original offence . . . and to the

* Article XX.
† Theol. Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
‡ Ibid.
§ Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
‖ Reformer Reformed, page 186.

penalty of his own actual transgressions, aggravated by his having made light of the gospel."*

Ah, indeed! and all this, when "for all his sins both original and actual, a perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction" has been made? Is not the sin of unbelief included among "all the sins of the whole world?" If it is, then, according to Arminians, "a perfect satisfaction" has been made for it, and it can make no manner of difference to a sinner whether he believes or not. If it is not so included, then "the offering of Christ once made, is (not) a perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world."

Whenever Mohammed was charged with having violated a precept of the Koran, he said the angel Gabriel had revealed a dispensation to cover the case. Now, although no such revelations are claimed by Arminians, yet, when one doctrine brings them into a difficulty, without abandoning it, they do invent another to bring them out. Accordingly, in the case before us, they shift their ground and tell us, that "To die for us, signifies, to die in the place and stead of man, as a sacrificial oblation, by which, satisfaction is made for the sins of the individual, so that they become remissible upon the terms of the evangelical covenant. When, therefore, it is said, that Christ, 'by the grace of God tasted death for every man,' and that he is the 'propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world,' it can only, we think, be fairly concluded from such declarations, and from many other familiar texts, in which the same phraseology is employed, that, by the death of Christ, the sins of every man are rendered remissible, and that salvation is consequently attainable by every man."†

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.
† Ibid. Chap. xxv.

Mr. Wesley says, "For the sake of his well-beloved Son, of what he hath done and suffered for us, God now vouchsafes on one only condition (which he himself enables us to perform,) both to remit the punishment due to our sins, to reinstate us in his favour, and to restore our dead souls to spiritual life, as an earnest of life eternal."*

Before, "the offering of Christ was a perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world," but now it is "a sacrificial oblation, by which satisfaction is made for the sins of the individual, so that they become remissible" only, and "salvation is consequently, attainable by every one," so that this "perfect satisfaction for all sin," is conditional; that is, "poised on the possibility of being or not being, (it) being left to the will of intelligent beings to turn the scale."†

We have seen already, that omniscience means "a power to know, and that repentance and faith mean a power to repent and believe." We now see that the "perfect satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world," means nothing more than that the sins of every man are rendered remissible on the terms of the evangelical covenant, and that it is for man to say whether the death of Christ shall be an atonement for sin or not. So then, after all the clamour about a limited atonement, Arminians themselves limit it to those that are saved.

What then, it may be asked, is the true doctrine on this subject? To this we reply, there is a sense in which Christ tasted death for every man. And

1. "He died for all," in such a sense, that "there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust."‡ "For as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. xv. 22.

* Sermon on Justification by Faith.

† Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary on Acts ii. ‡ Acts xxiv. 15.

2. That the whole world is so benefitted by his death that it can be said of his disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world."*

3. That "he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world," in such a sense, that in due time "all nations shall serve him,"† and "all shall know him from the least to the greatest,"‡ "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."§

4. That as the "ground was cursed for man's sake," Gen. iii. 17, and consequently every creature that dwells thereon, so that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," Rom. viii. 22; yet such is the extent and efficacy of the atonement, that "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. 21.

5. That he "gave himself a ransom for all," and "is the Saviour of all men" in such a sense, that the provisions of the gospel are amply sufficient for all, and the "gospel, in his name, is to be preached to all." And though we pretend not to explain every difficulty in the Bible, we go as far as the farthest in the offer to all, of a full and free salvation, and in pressing its claims with the energies of dying men, and in proclaiming, "Whosoever will, let him come and partake of the waters of life freely;" and in assuring them that if they "come to Christ, he will in no wise cast them out;" yet believing that Christ does nothing but from design, we do not believe that he died for those who will be finally lost, in the same sense, and with the same intention, that he died for those who will be finally saved. The following is taken from a letter from the Rev. Dr. Miller, of Princeton Theolo-

* Matt. v. 13, 14.
† Psalm lxxii. 11.
‡ Heb. viii. 11.
§ Isaiah xi. 9.

gical Seminary, to a minister in New England, dated February 9, 1836.

"So far as I understand the prevailing belief of the doctrine of atonement in our Church, it is the following: That Christ obeyed, suffered, and laid down his life by covenant; that what he did was strictly vicarious; i. e. he acted as the substitute of his people; that he died in a special sense for the elect; but that his obedience and sufferings were so perfectly *peculiar* and *unique* in their nature, that it would have been necessary they should be just what they were if the salvation of only one soul had been intended; and that nothing more would have been necessary, if countless millions of those who perish had been included in the purpose of salvation: That of course there is *no scantiness* in the provision of mercy: but that an ample foundation is laid for a sincere offer of salvation to all who hear the gospel. Unless I am deceived, this is substantially the view taken by ninety-nine out of every hundred of the *Old-school* ministers of our Church."

To this we will add a few thoughts, in part from an excellent little volume by the Rev. N. L. Rice, D. D., in part from the "Great Supper," by Dr. Fairchild, and in part of our own.

1. As Christ was omniscient, he must have known who would believe and be saved, and who would remain in unbelief and be lost. No being, possessed of even a moderate share of wisdom, will undertake a work, and especially an expensive one, without a reasonable prospect of success. Accordingly, a man always exposes himself to the charge of folly, who begins but is not able to finish. To say, therefore, that the Lord Jesus undertook a work in which he failed, is to impeach his wisdom.

2. When men in business have brought ruin upon themselves by rash speculations, they are free to con-

fess, that they would have pursued a different course if they could have foreseen the results. To assert then, that the Lord Jesus undertook that in which he failed, is to say, "he did not see the end from the beginning."

3. If he died with the intention of saving all, and all are not saved, it cannot be said, "He hath done whatsoever he pleased."*

4. "If he intended to save all, and all are not saved, he cannot be said to have Almighty power. The only reason why any being fails to accomplish his designs, is, that he has not the requisite ability. And hence, to affirm that the Redeemer has been unsuccessful in his attempts to save sinners, is to deny the infinite efficacy of his grace."

5. If he intended to save any who are not finally saved, then it follows that the angel was mistaken that said, "He shall save his people from their sins."† And David, when he said, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."‡ And Isaiah, when he said, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied."§

We therefore deny that he died for those who are finally lost, in the same sense, and with the same intention that he died for those who are finally saved, and for proof we appeal to the word of God.

In John vi. 37—39, our Saviour speaks of "all that the Father giveth him," and says, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day."

Speaking of them again, he says, "My Father,

* Psalm cxv. 3. † Matt. i. 21. ‡ Psalm xxii. 30.
§ Isaiah liii. 10, 11.

which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands."*

In Rev. xvii. 8, the angel that appeared to the Apostle John when in exile said, "They that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." In Rev. xiii. 8, this is called "the book of life of the Lamb."†

From these passages we learn—1. That some were given to Christ. 2. That "before they were born, or had done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth," (Rom. ix. 11,) their "names were written in the book of life, of the Lamb." This leads us to remark—3. That for those who were given to Christ, he died intentionally to save them. They are called

1. His sheep. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "I lay down my life for the sheep."‡

Here it will be observed that he does not say "I lay down my life for" all mankind, but "for the sheep" —"for them which thou hast given me,"§ "whose names were written in the (Lamb's) book of life from the foundation of the world." And, as if to prevent the possibility of its being said that he referred to those who were then his disciples, he added, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."**

* John x. 29.

† Rev. R. Watson, personating the believer, says, "My name is not in the book of life till my guilt is cancelled and my person adopted."—Sermon on the Inheritance of the Saints. Here Mr. Watson opposes his opinion to the statement of an angel.

‡ John x. 11, 15. § John xvii. 9. ** John x. 16.

2. They are called his seed.* "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."† "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands."

3. They are called his people. Mat. i. 21, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Isaiah liii. 8, "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." Titus ii. 13, 14, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Rev. v. 9, "And they (those around the throne) sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy . . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev. xiv. 2—4, "And I heard a voice of harpers, harping with harps, and they sung as it were a new song before the throne. . . . . These are they which follow the Lamb withersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men," &c.

It was then, especially for "the sheep," his "seed," his "people," that Christ was "stricken." These he "redeemed from among men to God by his blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation." These "he redeems from all iniquity, purifies them unto himself a peculiar people," and "saves them from their sins."

4. They are called his Church. Acts xx. 28, "Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Eph. v. 25, 26, "Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that

* Psalm xxii. 30. † Isaiah liii. 10.

he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

5. In accordance with these passages of Scripture the Presbyterian Confession of Faith says, "The Lord Jesus Christ, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father hath given unto him."* The Rev. R. Watson has, therefore, fallen into a great mistake, in saying that "No passage of Scripture can be adduced, or is even pretended to exist, which declares that Christ did not die equally for all men."†

6. Strange as it may appear, the doctrine we have here maintained was taught by Arminius. Speaking of "the fruits of the sacerdotal office in its administration by Christ," he says, "These benefits are, (1) The concluding and the confirmation of a new covenant. (2) The asking, obtaining, and application of all the blessings necessary for the salvation of the human race. (3) The institution of a new priesthood, both eucharistic and regal; and (4) The extreme and final bringing to God of all his covenant people."‡

Under this fourth head he says, "With this intent the covenant was contracted between God and men; with this intent the remission of sins, the adoption of sons, and the Spirit of grace were conferred on the Church. For this purpose the new eucharistic and royal priesthood was instituted; that being made priests and kings, *all the covenant people might be*

* See Confession of Faith Chap. viii. Sec. v.
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
‡ Life of Arminius by Bangs, pp. 130, 131.

brought to their God. In the most expressive language the Apostle Peter ascribes this effect to the priesthood of Christ in these words: 'Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, *that he might bring us to God,*' 1 Peter iii. 18. The following are also the words of an Apostle concerning the same act of bringing them to God, 'Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,' 1 Cor. xv. 24. In Isaiah's prophecy it is said, 'Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me.' Let these words be considered as proceeding out of the mouth of Christ, when he is bringing his children and addressing the Father; not that they may be for signs and for wonders to the people, but 'a peculiar treasure to the Lord.'

"Christ will, therefore, bring all his Church, whom he hath redeemed to himself by his own blood, that they may receive from the hands of the Father of infinite benignity the heavenly inheritance which has been procured by his death, promised in his word, and sealed by the Holy Spirit, and may enjoy it for ever."*

Here, then, we are taught that in reference to fallen man "a new covenant was contracted," "a new and royal priesthood instituted, that all the covenant people might be brought to God;"—that "Christ hath redeemed to himself, by his own blood," (a Church and) "will, therefore, bring all his Church, whom he hath redeemed, that they may receive from the hands of the Father the heavenly inheritance procured by his death, promised in his word, and sealed by the Holy Spirit."

Now, this is in exact accordance with the Presbyterian Confession of Faith and the Bible,† and in

* Life of Arminius by Bangs, pp. 137, 138.

† The General Conference have so far endorsed this quotation

accordance with it, the Methodist Episcopal Church North, unites in the following address to Christ:

> "Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood
> Shall never lose its power;
> Till all the ransomed Church of God
> Be saved to sin no more."*

This teaches, 1. That the Church of God has been ransomed.

2. That the blood of Christ will continue to have an efficacious effect, until all the ransomed shall be saved.

No language could be more explicit. To this we may add, that the above verse is taken from a hymn composed by that staunch Calvinist, William Cowper.

As very great stress is laid on such passages of Scripture as the following, viz: "He died for all," "tasted death for every man," "is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world," &c., we will make a few remarks in reference to them.

We have shown already that there is a sense in which Christ "died for all," &c., but not in the Arminian sense. We will show now that the passages referred to do not necessarily imply, nor teach unlimited redemption. This we will do by showing,

1. That such expressions are very often used by the inspired writers in a limited sense. Thus, Gen. xli. 54—57, "And the dearth was in all lands, but in Egypt there was bread"—"The famine was over all the face of the earth," "and all countries came into Egypt to Joseph, to buy corn, because the famine was sore in all lands."

In reference to this we remark, 1. That Egypt was, comparatively, a small country, containing an area of

from Arminius, that they have selected it from his writings, to make a part of the Biography they have published of him.

* Hymn 290.

a few hundred miles only. It is not probable, therefore, that the quantity of grain raised there, during the seven years of plenty, was sufficient to supply "all countries over all the face of the earth" through a "sore famine of seven years."

2. But admitting the possibility, yet "all countries over all the face of the earth" could not possibly at that period have obtained it from Egypt, if indeed it could have been done at any period. "All countries over all the face of the earth" must, therefore, be limited to the comparatively few that had access to Egypt. See also Daniel ii. 38, iv. 1; v. 19.

But not to multiply examples from the Old Testament, we will go to the New.

Matt. iii. 1, 5, 6. "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea," &c. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him." But notwithstanding we are here informed that "all went and were baptized," Luke informs us that "the Pharisees, (the most numerous sect among the Jews) and lawyers were not baptized of him." Luke vii. 30. The word "all" must therefore be here limited to a very large majority.

Mark i. 36, 37 "And Simon and they that were with him followed after (Jesus), and when they found him they said unto him, All men seek after thee." Did they intend to convey the idea that the whole human family were seeking Christ? or that many within Judea only, desired to see him?

Mark v. 20. "All men did marvel." Did the sacred writer intend, or expect to be understood as saying that all the then living sons of Adam marvelled because Christ had cured a maniac? or that this was true of the comparatively few only, who had heard of it?

Luke ii. 1, 3. "There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." "And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city." Did "every one" of the human family go to be taxed? or such only, within the Roman empire, as could go?

John xii. 19. "The Pharisees said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold the world is gone after him." Did the Pharisees intend, or expect to be understood as saying that all of Adam's living children had gone after Christ? or simply that his followers, among the Jews, had become numerous?

Acts xvii. 21. "All the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Did Luke expect that any reader would understand him to mean that none of the Athenians did anything else but what is here mentioned? or that such was a very common habit among them?

Acts xix. 19. "Many also of them which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men." Did Luke suppose he would be understood as saying that this was done in presence of the whole human family? or simply that it was done publicly?

Rom. i. 8. "I thank God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." Did not Paul expect to be understood as extending his meaning no further than to the churches then planted, most of which were within the Roman empire?

Col. i. 23. "The gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature under heaven." Although the commission is to "preach the gospel to every creature," it has never yet been done. "Every creature under heaven" must, therefore, have been

intended to be limited to those who had heard the gospel.

Titus ii. 11. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Is it true that "the grace" here referred to, had then, or has, at any time since, appeared to the whole human family? If not, Paul's meaning must have been intended to be limited to those to whom it had appeared.

Rev. xiii. 3. "All the world wondered after the beast." Did all the human family do this at any time? The meaning evidently is, that very many surveyed the pope of Rome with astonishment and went after him.

Such expressions are common in all languages, and are understood to be limited in their meaning to what the sense requires in the connections in which they stand. The same is true of the atonement also. The creeds of all evangelical churches, without exception, define the atonement in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures, "a satisfaction for sin." But for whom is it a satisfaction? If it is "for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual," then all will infallibly be saved. But Arminians deny that all will be saved, and this denial is certainly in accordance with the most explicit and unequivocal teaching of the Holy Scriptures. For the sins of whom, then, is the atonement "a satisfaction?"

God says to Abraham, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xii. 3. Again he says, "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxii. 18.

The blessing here promised refers, no doubt, to the sacred "Oracles" which were committed to, and preserved by his posterity, and to the Redeemer, who descended from him. It has been shown already that there is a sense in which all are literally blessed by the posterity of Abraham, but that in the sense of

universal salvation all are not so blessed. How then is it to be understood in reference to the blessing of salvation? We answer, the song of the redeemed explains it, "Thou has redeemed us out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation, and people." Rev. v. 9.

Again, the Apostle John, speaking of Christ, says, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 2.

Is it asked how we can explain this consistently, with the idea of a limited atonement? We answer, Paul explains it, when he says, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. v. 19. We may say with confidence, therefore, that Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, whom God is reconciling unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

CHAPTER XI.

EFFECTUAL CALLING.

It has been shown that the eternal plan of salvation, contemplated the human family as fallen in Adam, "dead in sin," and under sentence of "condemnation"—that of men thus fallen, some were "given to Christ," and their names recorded "in the book of life from the foundation of the world"—that for the sins of these, he fully satisfied the justice of God, purchased for them reconciliation with the Father, and an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.

But before he came in the flesh, it was announced, that he "should see his seed," Isaiah liii. 10; and "should save his people from their sins," Mat. i. 21; that "a seed should serve him which should be accounted to the Lord for a generation," Psalm xxii. 30; and that "he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied," Isaiah liii. 11; that "his people should be willing in the day of his power, Psalm cx. 3; and that "the ransomed of the Lord should return and come to Zion," Isaiah xxxv. 10. Accordingly, when addressing the Father, after his incarnation, he says, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," John xvii. 2. Again he says "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God; every one, therefore, that hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me," John vi. 37—39, 45. "All that ever came before me (professing to be the Messiah) are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them." "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck

them out of my Father's hand." John x. 8, 14, 16, 26—29.

In these passages we are taught that Christ "hath power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as were given him"—that, in addition to the sheep already gathered into his Church, he has others that will, in due time, be gathered in—that all who were given him shall come to him, and that not one of them will be lost—that they shall be all taught of God, and having learned of the Father, will come to the Son—that although "false prophets and false Christs may arise, and show great signs and wonders, so that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect," the sheep will not hear them. Mat. xxiv. 24; John x. 5, 8.

Again, we remark, that as Christ died for those that were given to him, with the design of saving them, so also for them he prayed, and continues to pray. Addressing the Father, he says, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." John xvii. 9, 20.

Again he says, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." John xvii. 24.

Now, as he has told us that the Father "has heard him, and hears him always," (John xi. 41, 42;) and as believers have such "an advocate with the Father," (1 John ii. 1,) they may well say with the Apostle, "Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh continual intercession for us," Rom. viii. 34. The Presbyterian Confession of Faith says, accordingly, that "To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the

same, making intercession for them, and revealing unto them, in and by his word, the mysteries of salvation, effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey."*

We have now given a summary view of the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church in reference to the efficacy of the divine call. We will, in the next place, present the Calvinistic doctrine of the Methodist Church on the same subject.

They "have established," as has been shown, "that the import of the death threatened to Adam, included corporal, spiritual and eternal death, and that the sentence included the whole of his posterity"—that although "a full provision to meet the case is made in the gospel, that does not affect the state in which we are born"—that "in Adam all died, all human kind, all the children of men that were then in Adam's loins. The natural consequence of which is, that every one descended from him comes into the world spiritually dead, dead to God, void of the image of God, and of all that righteousness and holiness wherein Adam was created"—that consequently, "an entire indifference or aversion to heavenly things is represented as the state of all who are not quickened by the instrumentality of the gospel, employed by the power and agency of the divine Author"—that "such is the corrupt state of man, that to suppose him capable of evangelical repentance, which is the result of a genuine principle, is to assume human nature to be what it is not"—that "boasting of our faith is cut off by the consideration that it is the gift of God"—that "the reason why all men have not (saving) faith, is because no man is able to work it in himself. It being the work of Omnipotence, requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul, than to quicken a

* See Confession of Faith, Chap. viii. Sec. viii.

dead body that lies in the grave, and none can create a soul anew, but He who at first created the heavens and the earth."

If then, such be the spiritual death of fallen man, nothing short of an effectual call from God can bring him into an estate of spiritual life. Accordingly, we have the following from Arminius, as quoted by Watson:

"It is impossible for free will without grace to begin or perfect any true or spiritual good. I say, the grace of Christ which pertains to regeneration, is simply and absolutely necessary for the illumination of the mind, the ordering of the affections, and the inclination of the will to that which is good. It is that which operates on the mind, the affections and the will; which infuses good thoughts into the mind, inspires good desires into the affections, and leads the will to execute good thoughts and good desires. It prevents, (goes before,) accompanies and follows. It excites, assists, works in us to will, and works with us, that we may not work in vain. . It begins, promotes, perfects, and consummates salvation. I confess that the mind of the natural and carnal man is darkened, his affections are depraved and disordered, his will is refractory, and that the man is dead in sin."*

Mr. Wesley is as decided as Arminius—"God works in you, therefore you can work, otherwise it would be impossible. If he did not work in you, it would be impossible for you to work out your own salvation. Yea, it would be impossible for any that is born of a woman, unless God work in him. Seeing all men are by nature not only sick, but dead in trespasses and in sins, it is not possible for them to do anything well till God raises them from the dead. It was impossible for Lazarus to come forth out of the grave till the

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.

Lord had given him life; and it is equally impossible for us to come forth out of our sins; yea, or to make the least motion towards it, till He who hath all power in heaven and in earth call our dead souls into life."*

The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church say, "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works, to faith and calling upon God—wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable, without the grace of God, by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us while we have that good will." (Article VIII.)

Mr. Wesley and the General Conference say, "Neither this opinion nor that, but the love of God humbles man, and that only. Let but this be shed abroad in his heart, and he abhors himself in dust and ashes. As soon as this enters into his soul, lowly shame covers his face. That thought, 'What is God? What hath he done for me?' is immediately followed by 'What am I?' And he knoweth not what to do, or where to hide, or how to abase himself before the great God of love."†

The Rev. R. Watson says, "God employs various means to awaken men to a due sense of their fallen and endangered condition, and to prompt and influence them (sometimes with mighty efficacy,) to seek his favour and grace in the way which he has ordained himself in his revealed word."‡

Thus far we are taught, as explicitly as language can teach it, that such is the state of spiritual death into which men are fallen, that God only can call them into a state of spiritual life, and that this he "sometimes does with mighty efficacy." If then, a

* Sermon on Working out our own Salvation.
† Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 89, 90.
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chapter xxiii.

man does not build a house without having intended to build it, nor Congress adjourn without having intended to adjourn, nor the President sign a bill without having intended to sign it, &c., &c., neither does God impart spiritual life in any case, without having intended to impart it. Unless, therefore, he imparts it to all, he must have selected those to whom he imparts it. Accordingly, the Rev. R. Watson says, "How truly is our salvation of God. God sought Saul, it was not Saul that first sought God. So it has been in regard to us, though the case as to ourselves be attended with less that is remarkable, yet it is equally true. Never should we have turned from the world and sin to God, had he not laid his hand upon us, and given us at once the disposition and the power."*

Now this accords with the teaching of the Scriptures. Psalm lxv. 4, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causest to approach unto thee."

This teaches, 1. That some are chosen. There is election. 2. That those who are chosen are "caused to approach unto God." There is the effectual call to the elect. Acts xiii. 48. "And when the gentiles heard this (the discourse of Barnabas and Paul) they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

This teaches, 1. That some are ordained to eternal life. There is election. 2. That under the preaching of the gospel, those who are "ordained to eternal life believe." There is the efficacy of the call to the elect.

Rom. viii. 28—"For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be con-

* Sermon on the Conversion of Saul.

formed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

This teaches, 1. That some are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. There is election. 2. That as they are predestinated to that blessing, their election is unconditional. 3. That they who are so predestinated, are called, justified, and glorified. There is the end of their election. 4. That although all who hear the gospel are in one sense called, they only who are called according to the purpose of God, and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, are so called as to be justified and glorified. There is the efficacy of the call.

We have now seen that the human family are, in consequence of Adam's sin, in a state of spiritual death, and under sentence of condemnation—that out of the mere good pleasure of God some of these were "chosen," and in due time "caused to approach unto God," "ordained to eternal life," and in due time, "believe." "Predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ," and in due time so "called," as to be "justified" and "glorified."

Now, this corresponds exactly with the teaching of Mr. Wesley and his brethren. These we have seen "differed in nothing from the doctrines of the Church of England, as laid down in her Prayers, Articles, and Homilies."* The seventeenth article of the Church of England is as follows, viz. "Predestination to life, is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in

* Watson's Life of Wesley, pp. 76, 77.

Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore they which he endued with so excellent a benefit of God, he called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season; they through grace obey the calling; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works, and at length by God's mercy they attain to everlasting felicity."

Such then is the Calvinistic teaching of the Methodist Episcopal Church in reference to the doctrine of effectual calling. The only difference thus far between them and those who adopt the Westminister Confession of Faith, is this, Methodists maintain that God sends countless millions to hell, notwithstanding "a perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction has been made for all their sins," while Presbyterians maintain that he takes all such to heaven.

Having presented the Calvinistic and scriptural view of the Methodist Episcopal Church on this subject, we will present next their hyper-Calvinistic view, viz. irresistible grace.

"It will be freely allowed," says Mr. Watson, "that the visitations of the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit are vouchsafed in the first instance, and in numberless other cases, quite independent of our seeking or desiring them and also that men are sometimes suddenly and irresistibly awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger by the Spirit of God, either through the preaching of the word instrumentally, or through other means, and sometimes even independent of any external means at all, and are thus constrained to cry out, 'What must I do to be saved?' All this is confirmed by plain verity of Holy Writ."*

Notwithstanding it is here admitted that "men

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.

are sometimes suddenly and irresistibly awakened," it is denied that such an influence is ever continued till conversion. "For," say they, "in the instance of the mightiest visitation we can produce from Scripture, that of St. Paul, we see when the irresistible influence terminated, and when his own agency recommenced. Under the impulse of the conviction struck into his mind, as well as under the dazzling brightness which fell upon his eyes, he was passive, and the effect produced for the time necessarily followed; but all the acts consequent upon this, were the results of deliberation, and personal choice."*

Here, it is admitted that the divine influence was irresistible until the subject of it became both willing and obedient—that is, the grace of God "worked in him both to will and to do" what God required. But if anything more is necessary to constitute a man a Christian, Arminians will do the world a favour by telling what it is. So then, Mr. Watson does teach the occasional irresistible efficacy of the divine call.

Mr. Wesley and the General Conference not only "allow (that) God may possibly, at sometimes work irresistibly in some souls (but) believe he does."† Mr. Wesley admits also, that "there are exempt cases, wherein the overwhelming power of divine grace does for a time work as irresistibly, as lightning falling from heaven."‡

Again he says: "I believe that the grace which brings faith, and thereby salvation, into the soul, is irresistible at that moment; that most persons do, at some other times, find God, irresistibly acting upon their souls. Yet, I believe that the grace of God, both before and after those moments, may be, and hath been resisted; and that in general, it does not

* Theological Institutes, part II. Chap. xxviii.
† Doctrinal Tracts page 87.
‡ Sermon on the General Spread of the Gospel.

act irresistibly, but we may comply therewith, or may not. And I do not deny, that in some souls the grace of God is so far irresistible, that they cannot but believe, and be finally saved."*

While then, the divines of Geneva speak of "efficacious grace," and the divines of Westminster say that "God effectually calls men by his word and Spirit, &c., yet so that they come most freely, being made willing by his grace,"† the hyper-Calvinistic Methodist Episcopal Church teaches, that there are cases wherein divine grace is "as irresistible as lightning"—that "men are sometimes suddenly and irresistibly awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger," and the influence continued until they both will, and do, as God requires; that "the grace of God which bringeth faith and thereby salvation into the soul, is irresistible at that moment," and it is "not denied, that in some souls, the grace of God is so far irresistible, that they cannot but believe, and be finally saved."

But we will show next what they teach as Arminians on this subject. "It will not bear disputing," says Mr. Watson "whether regeneration begins with repentance. For if the regenerate state is only entered upon at our justification, then, all that can be meant by it, to be consistent with the scripture, is, that the preparatory process which leads to regeneration, as it leads to pardon, commences with conviction and contrition, and goes on to a repentant turning to the Lord. In the order God has established, regeneration does not take place without this process. Conviction of the evil and danger of an unregenerate state must first be felt. God hath appointed this change to be effected in answer to our prayers, and acceptable prayer supposes we desire the

* Works, Vol. iii. p. 289. † Confession of Faith, x. Chap. Sec. i.

blessings we ask—that we accept of Christ as the appointed medium of access to God—that we feel and confess our inability to obtain what we ask of another; and that we exercise faith in the promises of God, which convey the good we seek. It is clear that none of these is regeneration, for they all suppose it to be a good in prospect, the object of prayer and eager desire."* "Regeneration is effected by this ("sanctifying") Spirit restored to us, and is a consequence of our pardon."†

"To be in Christ is to be justified, and regeneration instantly follows."‡ "God, the fountain of spiritual life, forsook the soul of Adam, now polluted by sin, (through the fall) and unfit for his residence. He became morally dead and corrupt, and as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, this is the natural state of his descendants."§

"The second Adam is a quickening Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the purchase of his redemption, to be given to man, that he may infuse into his corrupt nature the heavenly life, and sanctify and regenerate it."‖

In these quotations Mr. Watson teaches that we exercise a living faith in Christ, evangelical repentance toward God, and are justified, or pardoned, and offer earnest and acceptable prayer for the renovation of our corruptible nature, before we are regenerated. But if, as they have said before, "the state of the regenerate mind is represented as a resurrection, and a passing from death unto life,"¶ and "repentance is the result of a genuine principle,"** "flowing from love to God, and hatred to sin,"†† and "serious considerations of our ways, confession of the

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiv. † Ibid.
‡ Ibid. § Ibid. Chap. xviii. ‖ Ibid. ¶ Ibid.
** Ibid. Chap. xix. †† Wesley's Sermon on the New Birth.

fact, and sorrowful conviction of the evil and danger of sin, will follow the gift of repentance,"* we ask with Wesley, "Is it possible for a heart totally corrupt, 'dead in trespasses and in sins,' to exercise such repentance?"† Again, if "boasting of our faith, is cut off by the consideration, that it is the gift of God,"‡ and if "the true, living Christian faith, which, whosoever hath, is born of God, is not only an assent of the mind, or act of the understanding, but a disposition wrought in heart,"§ "it is a new creation."

Again, while Mr. Watson says, "To be in Christ, is to be justified, and regeneration instantly follows," Paul says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 2 Cor. v. 17.

So then, while Mr. Watson and the General Conference represent the sinner as exercising evangelical repentance and faith—as being united to Christ and praying for regeneration; according to themselves, Mr. Wesley, and Paul, he has already obtained what he is praying for, and labouring to obtain, viz. a new heart.

Again, if "the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, so that they who are in the flesh cannot please God,"‖ he who exercises such repentance and faith, and offers such prayer as God accepts, is "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works"**—is born again, and that not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."†† Accordingly the prophet Jeremiah, personating Ephraim, says, "Sure-

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.
† Sermon on the New Birth.
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.
§ Wesley's Sermon on the Marks of the New Birth.
‖ Rom. viii. 7, 8.
** Eph. ii. 10.
†† John i. 13; iii. 18, 36; v. 24; vi. 47.

ly after that I was turned I repented, and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh. I was ashamed, yea even confounded. Jeremiah xxxi. 19.

But although such language expresses the feelings of every true penitent, according to Mr. Watson and the General Conference, it should read, "After I repented, and was instructed, and smote upon my thigh, and was ashamed, yea even confounded, I was turned."

Again, according to Paul, "They that are in the flesh, cannot please God." Rom. viii. 8. But according to Watson and the General Conference, they can.

Again Mr. Watson says, "the Holy Spirit is given to man that he may infuse into his corrupt nature, the heavenly life, and sanctify and regenerate it."

Can any one tell what will be left in "the corrupt nature of man" to "regenerate," after "the Holy Spirit" has infused into it heavenly life and sanctified it?"

Dr. Fisk has "laid down the two following fundamental principles:"

1. "The work of regeneration is performed by the direct and efficient operations of the Holy Spirit upon the heart.

2. "The Holy Spirit exerts this regenerating power only on conditions to be first complied with by the subject of this change."*

Again he says, "'Repentance and faith are supposed to be the gospel conditions of regeneration, but it is denied that these are necessarily regeneration itself, or that they imply regeneration in any other sense than as antecedents to it."† "If God will not forgive sin without repentance, will he renew the heart without it? Has he anywhere promised this?

* Calvinistic Controversy, No. xiv. † Ibid. xv.

If not, but if on the contrary, he everywhere seems to have suspended the working out of our salvation in us, upon our repentance, then may we safely conclude—nay, then we must necessarily believe that we repent in order to be renewed. The same may be said of faith."*

"The order of the work seems to be—1. A degree of faith in order to repentance. 2. Repentance in order to such an increase of faith, as will lead the soul to throw itself upon Christ. 3. The giving up of the soul to Christ as the only ground of hope. 4. The change of heart by the efficient operation of the Holy Spirit."†

Here then, we have—1. "A degree of faith in order to repentance," and—2. Repentance in order to an increase of faith." But surely, if repentance is necessary "to an increase of faith," it must be necessary to originate faith: for if faith can originate without repentance, it may unquestionably increase without it. But if repentance is necessary to originate faith, yet comes second in the order, then it is manifest that there can be neither saving faith, nor repentance previous to regeneration.

But further: God says of Jeremiah, "Before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee." Jer. i. 5. And of John the Baptist it was said, "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb." Luke i. 15.

When therefore, Arminians tell us that "Repentance and faith are the gospel conditions of regeneration," and that the Holy Spirit exerts his regenerating power, *only* after these conditions are complied with by the subject of the change," they flatly contradict the Bible, not in reference to these cases only, but in reference to every infant in heaven.

Again, the "valley of dry bones" in Ezekiel's

* Calvinistic Controversy, No. xv. † Ibid.

vision, was said to represent the "whole house of Israel," and is admitted to represent the unregenerate human family; and their coming together, being clothed with flesh, living and standing up, under the preaching of the prophet, is, on all hands admitted to prefigure regeneration under the preaching of the gospel. Ezek. xxvii. Accordingly Paul, addressing the Ephesians says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in tresspasses and sins." Eph. ii. 1. Now surely, if repentance and faith are the prerequisites of regeneration, not one of those dry bones would have ever lived. These divines therefore contradict the Bible as to adults also.

Finally, they contradict its teaching as laid down by Arminius. "In his lapsed and sinful state," says he, "man is not capable of, and by himself, either to think, to will, or to do, that which is really good; but it is necessary for him to be regenerated, and renewed in his intellect, affections, or will, and in all his powers by God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, that he may be qualified rightly to understand, esteem, consider, will, and perform whatever is truly good."*

As then, the theory of regeneration under review flatly contradicts the Bible, and the Bible, as interpreted by Arminius, it must be false. But there is still another view of this subject we wish to notice.

The Rev. R. Watson tells us that, "The atonement of Christ, having made it morally practicable to exercise mercy, and having removed all legal obstructions out of the way of reconciliation, that mercy pours itself forth in ardent and ceaseless efforts to accomplish its own purposes," &c.†

Here the Deity is represented as making "ardent

* Life of Arminius, by Bangs, page 224.
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.

and ceaseless efforts to accomplish his purposes," yet as unable to do so.

Again, Mr. Wesley, in a conversation with the Bishop of London, in reference to "Justification by faith alone," remarked, that "the gift of faith, presupposes nothing in us but sin and misery."

"Then," said the Bishop, "you make God a tyrannical being, if he justifies some without any goodness in them preceding, and does not justify all. If these are not justified on account of some moral goodness in them, why are not they justified too?"

To this Wesley replied, "Because, my lord, they resist his Spirit; because they will not come to him that they may have life; because they suffer him not to work in them both to will and to do,"* &c. That is, they do not will to permit the Almighty to work in them to will and to do.

In our first chapter it was shown that, according to Arminians, the devil is an overmatch for God; and now, according to the same authority, we see him overmatched by man also. Again, they represent the Almighty as "saving all that consent thereto, and doing for the rest, all that infinite wisdom, almighty power, and boundless love can do, without forcing them to be saved, which would be to destroy the very nature he had given them."†

But if this be true, there is no sense in beseeching almighty God to "take away the stony heart, and give us an heart of flesh,"‡ or to "create in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us,"§ or to "work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13. The proper way would be to beseech almighty man, to permit God to change and save his soul.

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 75.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 56.
‡ Ezekiel xxxvi. 26. § Psalm li. 10.

Again, Mr. Wesley, commenting on Romans viii. 28, viz. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," says, "That is, those who are conformable."*

Here Mr. Wesley represents the Almighty as undertaking such cases only, as he knows he can manage; that is, he undertakes the easy ones. The same idea is presented by the General Conference, when, speaking of the work of sanctification, they say, "We know likewise, that God may, with man's good leave, cut short his work in whatever degree he pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment."†

This, it is true, is somewhat different from Mr. Wesley, when, in his review of Taylor on Original Sin, he asks, "What is holiness? Is it not essentially love, the love of God and all mankind, love producing 'bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering?' And cannot God shed abroad this love in any soul without his concurrence, antecedent to his knowledge or consent?"‡

Again, Mr. Wesley and the General Conference represent Christ as "saving all that consent thereto,"§ and as "electing all, who suffer him to make them alive."‖

But if this be true, then it follows that he cannot "quicken" some of those who are "dead in sin," without their "consent," nor give life to all such "dry bones," as were seen in Ezekiel's vision, unless they "suffer him" to do so. This certainly is somewhat different from Mr. Wesley, when he says, "In the same manner that he has assisted five in one

* Notes on the New Testament.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 345.
‡ Works, Vol. v. page 560.
§ Doctrinal Tracts, page 56. ‖ Ibid. page 174.

house to make the happy choice, fifty or five hundred in one city, and many thousands in a nation, without destroying their liberty, he can undoubtedly convert whole nations, or the whole world."* There is still another inconsistency or so, connected with this subject, which we wish to notice.

Mr. Wesley says, "It may be allowed God acts as a sovereign, in convincing some souls of sin, arresting them in their mad career by resistless power. It seems also, that at the moment of our conversion, he acts irresistibly. There may likewise be many irresistible touches in the course of our Christian warfare. But still, as St. Paul might have been either obedient or disobedient to the heavenly vision, so every individual may, after all that God has done, either improve his grace, or make it of none effect."†

Again he says, "I am persuaded there are no men living that have not many times resisted the Holy Ghost, and made void the counsel of God against themselves; yea, I am persuaded every child of God has had at some time, life and death set before him, eternal life and eternal death, and has had in himself the casting vote."‡

And yet, he says again, "I do not deny that in some souls the grace of God is so far irresistible, that they cannot but believe and be finally saved."§ Those who sail without helmsman, chart or compass, are liable to be driven by contrary winds in contrary directions.

As to the idea that "there are no men living, who have not made void the counsel of God," we need only say that such an idea is, at the least, anti-scriptural. Thus, Psalm xxxiii. 10, "The counsel of the Lord

* Sermon on the General Spread of the Gospel.
† Works, Vol. I, page 236.
‡ Sermon on the General Spread of the Gospel.
§ Works, Vol. III. page 289.

standeth for ever." Proverbs xix. 21, "There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand."

It is not wonderful, therefore, that when Gamaliel addressed the Jews, who were opposing the Apostles, he should say, "If this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." Acts v. 38, 39. It must be admitted, however, that Mr. Wesley would have expressed a different opinion.

Once more. Notwithstanding Paul tells us, "The carnal mind is enmity against God," &c., so that "they that are in the flesh cannot please him," Mr. Watson and the General Conference teach, as we have seen, that they can.

Dr. Fisk also, speaking of "the necessary preparatives" for regeneration, says, all we "claim is, they are what God approves of, and are the necessary conditions of his subsequent work of renewing the heart."*

Mr. Wesley "is very bold," however, and denies them both—"Holiness," he says, "can have no existence till we are renewed in the spirit of our mind. It cannot exist till the power of the Highest overshadowing us, we are brought from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God: that is, till we are born again; which, therefore, is absolutely necessary to holiness."†

Again, speaking of "the inbred corruptions of the heart," he asks, "What fruit can grow on such branches as these?" and answers, "Only such as are bitter, and evil continually."‡

Again he says, "Knowest thou not that thou canst do nothing but sin till thou art reconciled to God?

* Calvinistic Controversy, No. XV.
† Sermon on the New Birth.
‡ Sermon on The Way to the Kingdom.

Wherefore then dost thou say, I must do this and that first, and then I shall believe? Nay, but first believe. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the propitiation for thy sins. Let this good foundation first be laid, and then thou shalt do all things well."* Now, as the views of Mr. Wesley are Calvinistic and scriptural, they, of course, must have the proponderance, and set the others aside.

Finally, according to Mr. Watson, "The preparatory process which leads to regeneration, as it leads to pardon, commences with conviction and contrition, and goes on to a repentant turning unto the Lord." "The order of the divine operation in individual experience, is, conviction of sin, helplessness and danger, faith, justification and regeneration."†

According to Dr. Fisk, it is, as we have seen—"1. Faith. 2. Repentance in order to an increase of faith. 3. The giving up of the soul to Christ as the only ground of hope. 4. The change of heart by the efficient operations of the Holy Spirit."

According to Dr. A. Clarke, "The order of the great work of salvation is—1. Conviction of sin. 2. Conversion from sin. 3. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 4. Justification, or pardon."‡

Here then, are three widely different views of the same subject, by three standard writers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, each endorsed by the General Conference. But as those of Messrs. Watson and Fisk are endorsed and published only, while that of Dr. Clarke is selected from his writings, endorsed, and published, and as it is nearly Calvinistic, and nearly scriptural, it ought to prevail.

And now to sum up the whole, the Methodist Episcopal Church teaches, 1. The Calvinistic and scrip-

* Sermon on the Righteousness of Faith.
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiv.
‡ Clarke's Theology, page 148.

tural efficacy of the call of divine grace. 2. The hyper-Calvinistic irresistibility of the call. 3. The Arminian, or as we should rather say, the Methodist conditionality and resistibility of the call.

The same Church teaches again—1. That an unregenerate man may render to God an acceptable spiritual service. 2. That he cannot render such a service.

Finally, it teaches, as we have seen, that "the order of the divine operation is, 1. Conviction of sin. 2. Helplessness and danger. 3. Faith. 4. Justification and regeneration."

It teaches again, that the order is, 1. Faith. 2. Repentance, in order to an increase of faith. 3. The giving up of the soul to Christ. 4. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

It teaches again, that the order is, 1. Conviction of sin. 2. Conversion from sin. 3. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 4. Justification or pardon.

So then, although we have endeavoured to inform the reader of what it does teach on the subject we have had before us, we pretend not to have informed him of what it does not teach. When, therefore, Dr. Fisk and the General Conference, speaking of Calvinists, say, "If man has natural power to choose life, he has power to get to heaven without grace," but that it requires something more to enable the Arminian to get there, it must be, because the latter takes so many wrong roads.*

* The following is their language. "Herein we differ widely from the Calvinists. They tell us, man has natural power to choose life. If so, he has power to get to heaven without grace. We say, on the contrary, that man is utterly unable to choose the way to heaven, or to pursue it when chosen, without the grace of God." Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

CHAPTER XII.

OBJECTIONS TO SOME OF THE FOREGOING DOCTRINES.

HAVING noticed briefly, the inconsistencies of Arminians in reference to the divine decrees, the foreknowledge of God, the doctrine of election, of the atonement, and of effectual calling, we will notice next, the objections which they urge against some of the teachings of Calvinists on all these subjects. Here, it is to be remembered however, that they themselves teach all these doctrines, as decidedly as they are taught in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. When, therefore, they object, they object as Arminians, to what they teach as Calvinists.

Objection 1. "Whatever it prove beside, no Scripture can prove predestination."* Such is the text; now for the sermon.

We have seen already, that as Calvinists, the Methodist Episcopal Church holds to the doctrine of personal unconditional election, which is, as we have seen, "to holiness," to repentance, to faith, "to obedience," "to approach unto God," "to know his will," "to be conformed to the image of his Son," "to the adoption of children," and "to salvation." But that as Arminians, they maintain that election is conditional, and does not take place till after the subjects of it are holy, repent, believe, obey, approach unto God, know his will, are conformed to the image of his Son, are adopted as children, and saved from sin.

We have seen also, how completely their Calvinistic teaching is sustained by the word of God, and how they attempt, yet fail to sustain what they teach

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 172.

as Arminians. Our text naturally leads to some further notice of what they say on the latter side of the question. The Rev. Professor Alcinous Young, formerly of the Pittsburgh Conference, commenting on Psalm lxv. 4, viz. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee," says, "This passage proves that an election of God takes place when the sinner comes to him. The verb *choosest*, is in the present tense, and represents an action, or an event passing at that time. And so it is with the verb *causest*, also in the present tense. The sinner then, being drawn by the Holy Spirit, yields, or submits to the drawing, comes to Christ, and is blessed indeed. Such an individual may be said with propriety to be chosen of God."* This, however, exactly reverses the order of the Scriptures. David says, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causest to approach unto thee." But Mr. Young teaches that the sinner is first caused to approach, and is then chosen. The reader however will be at no loss to understand this, if he bears in mind the text, viz. "No Scripture can preach predestination."

Again, our Saviour says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me." John vi. 37. Dr. A. Clarke, commenting on this passage, says, "Those who come at the call of God, he is represented here as giving to Christ."

Here again the reader must recall the text. For while Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me," Dr. Clarke says, "All that come to Christ, the Father gives him."

The Rev. R. Watson, commenting on this passage, says, "The phrase, to be given to Christ by the Father, had a special application to those pious Jews

* Marriage Dinner, page 48.

who waited for redemption at Jerusalem; those who read and believed the writings of Moses, and who were thus prepared by more spiritual views than the rest, though they were not unmixed with obscurity, to receive Christ as the Messiah . . . . . Taught by the Father, led by the sincere belief and general spiritual understanding of the Scriptures, as to the Messiah, when Christ appeared, they were drawn and given to him, as the now visible and accredited head, teacher, Lord and Saviour of the Church."* To this interpretation however, there are insuperable objections. For 1. When Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me," he evidently alludes to the same that he does when addressing the Father, he says, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."† But although Christ himself authorizes so extensive a meaning, the Rev. R. Watson and the General Conference, limit it to the few "pious Jews, who waited for redemption at Jerusalem." 2. While Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me," the Rev. R. Watson says, "They were drawn and given," thus exactly reversing the order as laid down by Christ. But farther, we are here told of "pious Jews," "taught by the Father, and led by the sincere belief, and general spiritual understanding of the Scriptures as to the Messiah, not yet drawn to Christ. Again Paul says, Rom. viii. 28, 29, "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did pre-

* Theol. Inst. Part II. Chap. xxvii. † John xvii. 2.

destinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

To Calvinists, this passage appears to teach predestination in a very unequivocal manner. It is not so, however, with Arminians—let us see how it passes through their various crucibles. We will begin with Mr. Wesley, who interprets it three times, in as many different ways. 1. He says, "the first point is the foreknowledge of God. God 'foreknew' those in every nation who would believe, from the beginning of the world to the consummation of all things," &c.

"But to proceed. 'Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.' This is the second step, (to speak after the manner of men: for in fact there is nothing before or after in God.) In other words, God decrees from everlasting to everlasting, that all who believe in the Son of his love shall be conformed to his image, shall be saved from all inward and outward sin, into all inward and outward holiness," &c.

"'Whom he did predestinate, them he also called.' This is the third step: (still remembering that we speak after the manner of men.) To express it a little more largely:—According to his fixed decree, that believers should be saved, those whom he foreknows as such, he calls both outwardly and inwardly: outwardly by the word of his grace, and inwardly by his Spirit. This inward application of his word to the heart, seems to be what some term effectual calling. And it implies the calling them children of God, the accepting them in the beloved; the justifying them 'freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.'

"'Whom he called, those he justified.' This is the fourth step. . . . He executed his decree 'conforming them to the image of his Son,' (or as we

usually speak) sanctified them. It remains 'whom he justified, those he glorified.' This is the last step."*

Here then we are taught—1. That "God foreknew those in every nation who would believe." 2. "Them he did predestinate (that they) should be saved from all inward and outward sin, into all inward and outward holiness." 3. "Those whom he foreknows as such (viz. as believers) he calls outwardly by the word, and inwardly by his Spirit . . children of God." 4. "Sanctifies them." 5. "Gives them the kingdom which was prepared for them before the world began."

To this we reply, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life;" "is passed from death unto life,"† and "shall be saved."‡ All true believers are, therefore, according to the word of God, the "children of God." That is, they have been called "outwardly by the word, and inwardly by the Spirit" into that privilege. According to Mr. Wesley, however, all that the word and Spirit do for them, is to call them children after they are children. And this being done "outwardly and inwardly, is," he tells us, "what some term effectual calling."

This then, is one interpretation; take another, in which the General Conference unite with him. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, (ver. 28,) to them that are called (by the preaching of the word) according to his purpose," or decree unalterably fixed from eternity, "he that believeth shall be saved," "for whom he did foreknow," as believing, "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called "by his word" (so that term is usually taken in St. Paul's epistles,) "and whom he called, them he also justi-

* Sermon on Predestination.

† John iii. 36; v. 24.

‡ Mark xvi. 16.

fied, (the word is here taken in its widest sense, as including sanctification also,) and whom he justified them he also glorified."* Here, the interpretation is much more difficult than the dream. Under the guidance of the former interpretation, however, we suppose they mean that those who love God, and believe, are effectually called; outwardly by the word, and inwardly by the Spirit, "children of God," and "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son," &c. According to the Scriptures, however, such persons are conformed to that image now. Col. iii. 10. So that these divines have them predestinated to be conformed to what they are conformed to.

Having noticed two of Mr. Wesley's interpretations, we come to the third. Commenting on the 29th verse, he says, "Here the Apostle declares who those are, whom he foreknows and predestinated to glory, namely, those who are conformable to the image of his Son. This is the mark of those who are foreknown and will be glorified."† Before, we had all who were foreknown as believers, predestinated to holiness—outwardly and inwardly called "children of God," &c. Now, however, we are taught that some only of the human family are "conformable" to the divine image, and that as these are foreknown of God, they only are predestinated to be conformed to that image, &c. In other words, he teaches that the Almighty undertakes such only as he knows he can manage—that is, the easy ones. This, it is true, is somewhat different from Mr. Wesley, when he admits "there are exempt cases wherein the overwhelming power of divine grace does for a time work as irresistibly as lightning"—and that "in the same manner that he has assisted five in one house to make the

* Doctrinal Tracts, p. 28.
† Notes on the New Testament.

happy choice, fifty or five hundred in one city, and many thousands in a nation, without destroying their liberty, he can undoubtedly convert whole nations, or the whole world, it being as easy for him to convert the whole world as one individual soul."

Dr. Fisk, commenting on this passage, says of these individuals, that they were "foreknown as possessing something which operated as a reason why they should be elected rather than others: foreknown doubtless as believers in Christ, and as such, according to the plan or decree of God, they were to be made conformable to the image of Christ's holiness here, and glory hereafter."*

Here it is admitted that the conformity to the image of Christ, to which some are predestinated, takes place in the present life, and not hereafter, as Mr. Wesley teaches.

The Rev. R. Watson, commenting on the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth verses, says, "The gospel reveals it that those who love God shall find that all things shall work together for their good, because they are predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God in his glory. Since therefore, none but such persons were so foreknown, and so predestinated to be heirs of glory, the gospel calling was issued according to his purpose or plan of bringing them that love him to glory, in order to produce this love in them."†

While then Mr. Wesley teaches that God selects such only as he foreknows he can manage, and predestinates them to glory, Mr. Watson teaches that he selects those who love him, and predestinates them to be conformed to the image of his Son, and calls and brings them to glory in order to produce this love in them.

* Calvinistic Controversy—the Sermon.

† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

The only peculiarity about these interpretations is, that they are pre-eminently unscriptural, contradictory, and absurd; and that they agree in nothing but that "no Scripture can teach predestination."

Again, God says, Rom. ix. 15, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." And Paul adds, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

Let us now see with what ease Mr. Wesley helps God and Paul into rank Arminianism.

"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, namely, on him who believeth in Jesus. 'So then, it is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth,' to choose the conditions on which he shall find acceptance."*

When again, Paul asks, Rom. ix. 21, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?" Mr. Wesley introduces Arminianism thus, "Hath not God power over his creatures to appoint one vessel, namely the believer, to honour, and another, the unbeliever, to dishonour?"†

According to Paul, a believer is an honoured, and an unbeliever a dishonoured vessel now. But while Paul has the potter *making* one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, out of the same lump of clay, Mr. Wesley has him *appointing* a vessel already honoured to honour, and another vessel already dishonoured to dishonour.

On this passage, so easily and summarily dispatched by Mr. Wesley, and with so much satisfaction to himself, Mr. Watson extends his comment over four closely printed octavo pages.‡ Yet if any one can

* Sermon on Justification by Faith.
† Notes on the New Testament.
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

see what he is after, or what he brings out of it, save that "no Scripture can teach predestination," he is possessed of no common powers of discernment.

Gibbon says, "the Church of Rome has canonized Augustin, and reprobated Calvin. Yet as the real difference between them is invisible, even to a theological microscope, the Molinists are oppressed, by the authority of the Saint, and the Jansenists are disgraced by their resemblance to the heretic. In the meanwhile, the Protestant Arminians stand aloof, and deride the mutual perplexity of the disputants. Perhaps a reasoner still more independent, may smile in his turn, when he peruses an Arminian Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans."* Gibbon little knew what lights would rise after him.

Once more. Paul says, Eph. i. 3, 5, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

The Rev. R. Watson commenting on this passage, admits that the Apostle speaks of an election "as the means of faith, and of faith as the end of election," but he contends, that he does not speak of personal election, but of "the collective election of the whole body of Christians." The Apostle, he says, speaks of the election of believing Jews and Gentiles into the Church of God, in other words, of the eternal purpose of God, upon the publication of the gospel, to constitute his visible Church no longer upon the ground of natural descent from Abraham, but upon the foundation of faith in Christ."†

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. xxiii.

† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

To this we reply, that the Apostle says not a word about "constituting his visible church." He speaks first of an election to holiness, or of our being "chosen that we should be holy and without blame before God, in love." But as holiness and love are strictly personal, an election to holiness and love can be nothing else than personal election.

Again, this is an election "to the adoption of children." But believers, as individuals, and such only, are adopted as God's children. Therefore the election of them "unto the adoption of children," must be personal, and must take place before they are children. Moreover, the Apostle uses the personal pronoun, *us*, showing that he meant to speak of persons only, and not of Jews and Gentiles generally.

Besides, the exposition of Mr. Watson is contradictory; for while he admits that it is an election "as the means of faith, and of faith as the end of election," he contends that it is an election "of believing Jews and Gentiles, into the Church of God." But if it is an election of believers, it is an election of those who have faith; and if so, how can it be "an election as the means of faith."

In the volume of Methodist Doctrinal Tracts we find the following, on pages 136, 137, 138, viz.

"The Scripture saith, Eph. i. 4, 'God hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.' And St. Peter calls the saints, 1 Pet. i. 2, 'elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience.' And St. Paul saith unto them, 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14, 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; whereunto he hath called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.' From all these places

of Scripture it is plain, that God has chosen some to life and glory, before, or from the foundation of the world."

So Calvinists think, but Arminians hold to two sides at least of every question. And so they immediately enter upon a course of reasoning from which they conclude—"It is plain, they were not chosen from the foundation of the world." Now surely, if one of these is plain, the other is not plain, and if one of them is true, the other is not true. Let us see: To make out their case they say, "God saith to Abraham," Rom. iv. 17, 'As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead and calleth things that are not as though they were.' Observe, God speaks then at that present time to Abraham, saying, 'I have made thee a father of many nations!' The Apostle tells us plainly, it was 'so before God, who calleth things that are not, as though they were.' And so he calleth Abraham the father of many nations, though he was not as yet the father even of Isaac, in whom his seed was to be called. God useth the same manner when he calleth Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. xiii. 8, although he was not slain for some thousand years after. Hence therefore, we may easily understand what he speaks of electing us from the foundation of the world. God calleth Abraham a father of many nations, though not so at that time. He calleth Christ the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, though not slain till he was a man in the flesh. Even so he calleth men elected from the foundation of the world, though not elected till they were men in the flesh. Yet it is all so, before God, who knowing all things from eternity, calleth things that are not as though they were. By all which it is plain, that as Christ was called the

Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and yet not slain till some thousand years after, till the day of his death: so also men are called elect from the foundation of the world, and yet not elected perhaps till some thousand years after, till the day of their conversion to God," &c. And thus they come to the conclusion, "It is plain then, neither were they chosen before the foundation of the world." That is, a flat contradiction of a previous conclusion, viz. that they were chosen.

It is admitted, however, that it was known they would be chosen. A. proposes to give to each of his sons, B. and C., a farm, when they reach the age of twenty one, giving to B., the choice. B. replies, "I know very well which I will choose." Can any one separate the knowledge of B. from his choice, or tell how he could know which farm he would choose, unless he had chosen it? It will not be denied that at the time spoken of, Abraham was designated to what others were not; that at the time spoken of, Christ was designated to what others were not, just as Cyrus was named and designated to rebuild the temple, long before he was born; and that at the time spoken of, the elect were designated to what others were not. Away then with a mere play upon words, where the meaning is plain.

When, therefore, Mr. Wesley and the General Conference say, "no Scripture can teach predestination," they ought to have added, "Namely, after it has passed through the Arminian crucible."

But why is not the same liberality of interpretation extended to the Confession of Faith also? It would steer wide of predestination either there, or in Calvin's Institutes, or in any Calvinistic authority that was ever written, and thus end the Calvinistic controversy. An intimate friend of ours was once conversing with an Arminian about some of the doctrines contained

in the Confession of Faith. The latter remarked, that there were doctrines in that book he could not receive. Well, said our friend, suppose I read some out of it. Accordingly, he commenced reading; but although, after a few sentences, he read nothing but the passages of Scripture given, in proof of the Confession, the Arminian said he "could not believe them."

Having noticed one objection to the doctrine of predestination, we proceed to a second, viz. "It leads to the idea of infant damnation;"* "brings with it the repulsive and shocking opinion of the eternal punishment of infants;"† "causes not only children not a span long, but the parents also, to pass through the fires of hell."‡

The above are samples of the manner in which this charge is reiterated by every controversial Arminian author that has come under our notice. The reader will be surprised to learn that the "shocking and repulsive doctrine" here objected to, is taught by Arminians, but not by Calvinists, and in the Methodist, but not in the Presbyterian Church.

In "the Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," the prayer before administering the ordinance of infant baptism, closes as follows, viz. "Regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water for this holy sacrament, and grant that this child now to be baptized may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"May ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children." We have already seen, that according to Arminians, converted persons, and they only, are "chosen to salvation." And that they are

* Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
‡ Doctrinal Tracts, page 173.

not "chosen" till after their conversion. The prayer then "that the child to be baptized may receive the fulness of grace and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children," supposes that by baptism it is brought into that number, or in other words, is regenerated. That this is its meaning, appears from the fact that such was the sentiment of Mr. Wesley, who composed the prayer.

In his sermon on "The Marks of the New Birth," addressing his hearers, he asks, "Who denies that ye were then (in baptism,) made children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven."

In his sermon on "The New Birth," he says, "It is certain our Church supposes that all who are baptized in their infancy, are at the same time born again."

In his "Treatise on Baptism," (which is now one of the "Doctrinal Tracts" of the Methodist Episcopal Church,) speaking of "the benefits we receive by baptism," he says, "The first of these is the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death," &c. 2. "By baptism we enter into covenant with God," &c. 3. "By baptism we are admitted into the Church, and consequently made members of Christ, its head," &c. 4. "By baptism, we who were 'by nature children of wrath,' are made the children of God. And this regeneration, which our Church, in so many places ascribes to baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the Church, though commonly connected therewith; being grafted into the body of Christ's Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace. This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord, 'Except a man be born again, of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' John iii. 5. By water then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated, or born again; whence it is called also by the apostle, 'the washing of regeneration.' Our

Church, therefore, ascribes no greater virtue to baptism than Christ himself has done; nor does she ascribe it to the outward washing, but to the inward grace, which added thereto makes it a sacrament. Herein a principle of grace is infused, which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long continued wickedness."

Again, he says, "In the ordinary way, there is no other means of entering into the Church or into heaven" (than by baptism.) "In all ages, the outward baptism is a means of the inward; as outward circumcision was of the circumcision of the heart."*

The meaning of the prayer quoted, is thus placed beyond a doubt; and the doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church on this subject, according to their own standards, is, that those who are baptized in infancy are regenerated, elected to salvation, and dying in infancy are saved. Of course then, those who are not baptized, are not regenerated, or elected to salvation, and dying in infancy are lost; and so say the Doctrinal Tracts, page 251, "If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism; seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism."

By way of apology for Mr. Wesley, it is stated, in a note to the second head of his Treatise on Baptism, that "as a clergyman of the Church of England, he was originally a High-churchman in the fullest sense." That "when he wrote this in the year 1756, he seems still to have used some expressions, in relation to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, which we at this day should not prefer." That "some such, in the judgment of the reader, may be found under this second head."†

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 246—250. † Ibid. p. 249.

To this we reply,

1. That Mr. Wesley was no more of a High-churchman when he wrote the "Treatise on Baptism," than when he wrote the prayer at baptism, for the quotations from the former are nothing more than an explanation of the latter. But then, the Methodist Episcopal Church have adopted the prayer and the treatise also.

2. Although there is an explanatory note for what is contained in the second head, there is no such note for what is contained under the third. As then, they teach under that head, infant reprobation, and in the same volume of Tracts, pages 11, 12, 16, say that "unconditional election necessarily implies unconditional reprobation," according to themselves they must hold to the former, for they hold to the latter, which they say "cannot be separated from it." That is, they hold that unbaptized infants are reprobated to damnation.

3. If Mr. Wesley was a High-churchman when he wrote that Treatise, he was a High-churchman all his days, for it is found unaltered and without note, in the latest edition of his works, revised and corrected by himself.

4. If Mr. Wesley was a High-churchman when he wrote the Treatise, the Methodist Episcopal Church is High-church also, for they have transferred it to their volume of "Doctrinal Tracts," and thus adopted it.

I know it has been stated, that this Treatise was slipped into that volume by some unknown hand, and without being noticed, has been suffered to continue there.

To this we reply,

1. It seems extremely improbable, that in so large a body as the Methodist Church, it should escape no-

tice for more than eighteen years, if it was there by stealth.

2. It is published in a stereotyped edition, and its contents named in the latest catalogue of the Book Concern. It does not seem fair, therefore, to set aside by such suggestions, the following statement on the title page, viz. "A collection of interesting Tracts, explaining several important points of Scripture doctrine, published by order of the General Conference, by G. Lane and C. B. Tippet, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1850." Also, the following from the advertisement, viz. "Several new Tracts are included in this volume, and Mr. Wesley's Short Treatise on Baptism, is substituted in the place of the extract from Mr. Edwards on that subject."

The eternal damnation of by far the greater part of those who die in infancy, is therefore a doctrine clearly contained in the "Book of Discipline and Articles of Religion," and in the "Doctrinal Tracts" of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Having shown that infant damnation is a doctrine of Arminians, we will show next, that it is not a doctrine of Calvinists. And here we may remark, that the Westminster Assembly of divines were careful not to make that a part of their written Creed about which the Scriptures are silent; hence they set down nothing as a part of their Confession of Faith, for which they did not believe they had a "thus saith the Lord." Finding the Scriptures silent in relation to the salvation of many who die in infancy, they are silent also. But finding the Scriptures clear, in reference to the salvation of some who die in infancy, they express themselves accordingly. The Calvinistic writer cannot be found, who teaches the perdition of any one who dies in infancy.

The only authority in the Presbyterian Church on which the charge is based, is a passage in the tenth

chapter of the Confession of Faith. It is designed to explain the subject of "effectual calling;" and as infants cannot be called by the external ministration of the word, the question naturally arises, In what manner consistent with God's method of mercy, can infants be saved? This is answered, Section 3d, as follows: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when, where, and how he pleaseth."

From this passage our opponents argue thus: If some who die in infancy are elect, others dying in infancy are reprobate, or non elect. So according to these good brethren, when John, in his Second Epistle, addressing "the elect lady," speaks of "her elect sister," it follows that she must have had a reprobate sister also! It need scarcely be said that the word *elect*, when used in Scripture with reference to salvation, does not signify, chosen out of a class or age, but out of the general mass of mankind, Thus, the "elect sister" mentioned, was not chosen with reference to a particular family, but out of the fallen race of Adam. In this scriptural sense, the term is uniformly employed in the Presbyterian Confession. When infants are styled elect, its obvious meaning is that they are elected out of the mass of human beings, and this is in perfect accordance with the opinion of Presbyterians, that "all who die in infancy, are elect unto salvation."*

But says Mr. Watson, "That some of those who as they suppose, are under this sentence of reprobation, die in their infancy, is probably, what most Calvinists allow, and if their doctrine be received, cannot be denied; and it follows therefore, that all such infants are eternally lost."†

* Fairchild's Unpopular Doctrines of the Bible, pp. 86, 87.
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

"Is probably, what most Calvinists allow!" I answer, "Calvinists allow" no such thing.

A few sentences previous to the above, the same writer says, "some Calvinists have, to get rid of the difficulty, consigned them to annihilation."

Now if Mr. Watson, or any of his brethren, will tell who those Calvinists are, and sustain the assertion by quotations from their writings, they will add to the knowledge of Christendom. Till then, this may be set down, as one of the innumerable Arminian slanders, of which we will speak hereafter.

The system of John Calvin, more than of any other Reformer, made special provision for the salvation of those dying in infancy, whether baptized or not. Previous to the Reformation, infant baptism was almost universal. From within one or two hundred years of the Apostles, those who maintained infant baptism, maintained baptismal regeneration, also. Hence they taught that the unbaptized could not be saved. This is the doctrine of Roman Catholics, High-church Episcopalians, and of the Methodist Church now; hence they baptize the children of all who apply for it, whether believers or unbelievers. John Calvin was the first after the Apostolic day to dispel the darkness. His followers have walked in his footsteps, and in accordance with the word of God, they baptize the children of professed believers only.

Calvin, in his Institutes, Book IV., Chap. xvi. Sec. 31, represents an opponent as arguing "that all who do not believe on Christ, remain in spiritual death, and that the wrath of God, abideth on them, John iii. 36; that infants therefore, who are incapable of believing, must remain in their own condemnation." To this, says Calvin, "I answer, that Christ is not speaking of the general guilt in which all the descendants of Adam are involved, but only threaten-

ing the despisers of the gospel, who proudly and obstinately reject the grace that is offered them, and this has nothing to do with infants. I likewise oppose a contrary argument. All those whom Christ blesses are exempt from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God. And as it is known that infants were blessed of him, it follows that they are exempted from death."—See also, Book IV., Chap. xvi. Sec. 17, and Chap. xv. Sec. 20, 22.

So then after all, it is Arminianism, and not Calvinism, that "leads to the idea of infant damnation," "brings with it the repulsive and shocking opinion of the eternal punishment of (all) infants," except the few that are baptized, and "causes not only children of a span long, but the parents also to pass through the fire of hell." Calvinism teaches that all infants dying in infancy, were "chosen to salvation, regenerated, and saved by Christ." While Arminianism teaches that only the few who are baptized are elected to salvation, and dying in infancy go to heaven. "To state this doctrine in its true character is enough to chill one's blood."*

This gross, oft repeated, and long continued slander of Calvinists ought to be publicly withdrawn.

A third objection to predestination is, that it necessarily involves the doctrine of irresistible grace.

Thus says Mr. Wesley, "By the assistance of God I shall take your whole system together, viz. irresistible grace for the elect," &c.†

Mr. Watson says, "An unguarded opinion, as to the irresistibility of grace, and the passiveness of man in conversion, has also been assumed, and made to give air of plausibility to the predestination scheme." Again, he says, "These premises also secure the

* Calvinistic Controversy, page 47.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 50.

glory of our salvation to the grace of God; but not by implying the Calvinistic notion of the continued and uninterrupted irresistibility of the influence of grace, and the passiveness of man, so as to deprive him of his agency."*

Dr. Fisk says, "The doctrine of unconditional election necessarily implies irresistible grace, absolutely impelling and controlling the will."†

Does the reader remember the teaching of these divines? viz. "that there are exempt cases wherein the overwhelming power of divine grace does for a time work as irresistibly as lightning," "that men are sometimes suddenly and irresistibly awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger independent of any external means;" "that the grace which bringeth faith, and thereby salvation into the soul, is irresistible at that moment;" and that "in some souls the grace of God is so far irresistible, that they cannot but believe, and be finally saved?" And yet these are the men who object to predestination, because, as they say, it "necessarily implies irresistible grace."

I will next show, that according to their teaching, that doctrine does not imply such grace.

"Of a divine election or choosing and separation from others," says Mr. Watson, "we have three kinds mentioned in the Scriptures.

"The first is the election of individuals to perform some particular and special service; Cyrus was elected to rebuild the Temple; the twelve Apostles were elected to their office by Christ; St. Paul was a chosen or elected vessel, to be the Apostle of the Gentiles.

"The second kind of election which we find in Scripture, is the election of nations, or bodies of people, to eminent religious privileges, in order to accom-

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvii.
† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon,

plish by their superior illumination, the merciful purposes of God, in benefiting other nations, or bodies of people. Thus the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, were chosen to receive special revelations of truth; and to be the people of God; to be his visible Church, and publicly to observe and uphold his worship.

"The third kind of election is personal election; or the election of individuals, to be the children of God, and the heirs of eternal life."*

Mr. Wesley says, "I believe that God, before the foundation of the world, did unconditionally elect certain persons to do certain works; as Paul to preach the gospel; that he has unconditionally elected some nations to receive peculiar privileges, as the Jewish nation in particular: that he has unconditionally elected some nations to hear the gospel, as England and Scotland now, and many others in past ages: that he has unconditionally elected some persons to many peculiar advantages, both with regard to temporal and spiritual things: and I do not deny, though I cannot prove it so, that he has unconditionally elected some persons to eternal glory."†

The first kind of election here mentioned, is that "of individuals to perform some particular service;" thus "before the foundation of the world, Paul was unconditionally elected to preach the gospel." Did this unconditional election of Paul destroy his free agency? Let us first hear Paul himself. On his way to Damascus as a bitter persecutor, he received a miraculous call to the ministry. Referring to this, he says, Acts xxvi. 19, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Again he says, 1 Cor. ix. 17, "If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward;" evidently implying (as his whole life proved,) that he laboured

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
† Wesley's Works, Vol. III. page 289.

most willingly, and in the full exercise of his free agency.

Let us next hear Mr. Watson. "In the instance of the mightiest visitation we can produce from Scripture, that of St. Paul, we see where the irresistible influence terminated, and where his own agency commenced. Under the conviction struck into his mind, as well as under the dazzling brightness which fell upon his eyes, he was passive, and the effect produced for the time necessarily followed, but all the actions consequent upon this were the result of deliberation and personal choice."*

Finally, let us hear Mr. Wesley: "Paul might have been either obedient or disobedient to the heavenly vision."†

If then "the unconditional election of Paul to preach the gospel did not imply irresistible grace, absolutely so impelling and controlling the will" that he could not have omitted to do what he was elected to do, neither was such grace implied in the unconditional "election of Cyrus to rebuild the Temple," nor in the "unconditional election of some nations to peculiar privileges, nor in the unconditional election of some nations to hear the gospel," nor in the unconditional election of "some persons to eternal life."

That unconditional election, does imply efficacious grace, is what Calvinists believe and teach, but that it implies irresistible grace, is taught by Methodists only.

We have already shown that according to the Confession of Faith, the decrees of God do not destroy, but establish the free agency of man—that God has decreed that man shall be free, and that he cannot be otherwise than free. If then there is any point in

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.
† Wesley's Works, Vol. III. page 289.

Calvinism where the grace of God is irresistible, it must be in effectual calling. In reference to this the Confession of Faith says, Chap. X. Sec. 1, "All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call by his Word and Spirit out of the state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds, spiritually, and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his Almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace."

There is nothing in the Confession of Faith on the subject of effectual calling stronger than this. The teaching in the Larger and Shorter Catechism is the same. I will now show that the Confession of Faith is strictly in accordance with the Scriptures.

1. The divine call is said to be made effectual "by enlightening their minds, spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God."

Accordingly when our Saviour met the persecuting Saul on his way to Damascus, (Acts xxvi. 16,) he addressed him thus, "I have appeared unto thee, to make thee a minister to the gentiles, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

Whenever, therefore, any of the fallen race of man are turned "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," their eyes have been opened; that is, they received a spiritual illumination. Or, as our Saviour expresses it, John vi. 45, "They have been taught of God." And he further assures us that "every one who has been so taught, cometh unto him."

2. The divine call is rendered effectual "by taking away their hearts of stone and giving them a heart of flesh."

Thus the Apostle John, speaking of the regenerate, says, they "were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 13. And God by Ezekiel says, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh." Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

3. "By renewing their wills; and by his mighty power determining them to that which is good."

Deut. xxx. 6, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul:" Ezek. xxx. 26, "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know . what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." Eph. i. 18, &c.

4. "And by effectually drawing them to Christ, so that they come most freely, being made willing by his grace."

Thus, Jer. xxxi. 3, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Cant. i. 4, "Draw me, we will run after thee." Psalm cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Phil. ii. 13, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

Thus it is seen that "the doctrine of unconditional election," as taught by Calvinists, does not "necessarily imply irresistible grace, absolutely impelling and controlling the will," though as taught by Methodists, it does. A single illustration, and we pass on. When Jacob was on his return from Padan-aram, Gen. xxxii.

24, Esau, his enraged brother, at the head of four hundred men, came out against him. In this exigency the patriarch, having sent before a present to appease the wrath of the enemy, spent the night in prayer. What was the result? Why Esau, instead of meeting him with a drawn sword, as he had intended, ran as soon as he saw him, and fell upon his neck, and embraced him.

Does any one suppose his free agency was destroyed? Here then, we have an instance of all conquering grace. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it whithersoever he will." "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." There is a sense, it is true, in which the charms of Christ are made irresistible, but O, it is a sweet constraint.

> "'Twas the same love that spread the feast,
> That *sweetly forced* us in;
> Else we had still refused to taste,
> And perished in our sin."

A fourth objection to the doctrine of predestination is, that it "makes God partial."

Thus says Dr. Fisk, in his Calvinistic Controversy, page 50, "The doctrine we oppose makes God partial, and a respecter of persons."

Mr. Watson says, "It cannot be reconciled with that frequent declaration of Scripture, that God is no respecter of persons."*

Mr. Wesley says, "You contradict the whole oracles of God, which declare throughout, God is no respecter of persons." Acts x. 34. "There is no respect of persons with him." Rom. ii. 11.†

Here then is the charge, let us notice next, the admission of those who make it.

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 166.

The Rev. R. Watson, speaking of the ninth chapter of Romans, says, "We have in it several instances of unconditional election. Such was that of Jacob to the exclusion of Esau, which election was declared when the children were yet in the womb, before they had done good or evil, so that the blessing of the special covenant did not descend upon the posterity of Jacob because of righteousness in their progenitor. In like manner when Almighty God determined no longer to found his visible Church upon natural descent from Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob, nor in any line according to the flesh, but to make faith in his Son Jesus Christ the gate of admission into this privilege, he acted according to the same sovereign pleasure. A man of Macedonia appears to Paul in a vision by night, and cries, 'Come over into Macedonia, and help us.' But we have no reason to believe that the Macedonians were better than other gentiles, although they were elected to the privilege and advantages of evangelical ordinances. So in modern times, parts of Hindostan have been elected to receive the gospel, and yet its inhabitants presented nothing more worthy of this election than the people of Thibet or California, who have not been so elected."*

Mr. Wesley, it has been already shown, teaches the same doctrine. Here then it is admitted that God does more for the temporal and spiritual advantages of some nations than he does for others. It is admitted also, that this bestowment of his favours is sovereign and unconditional—that is, it does not rest on superior goodness.

Dr. Scott truly remarks, that "the doctrine of personal election to eternal life, when properly stated, lies open to no objection, which may not likewise with

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

equal plausibility be urged against the conduct of God, in placing one nation in a more favourable condition than another, especially as to religious advantages; without the good or bad behaviour of either of them, or any discernible reason for the preference. In both cases we may say unmerited favour to one person or people is no injustice to others; and the infinitely wise God hath many reasons for his determinations, which we cannot discern, and which he designs not to make known to us."*

These divines however go a step further, and teach the doctrine of personal, unconditional election itself, as has been shown.

3. They teach again, that God does more for some than he does for others in the efficacy of the divine call, as has been shown. And yet these are the men who object to predestination, because (as they say,) "it makes God partial, and a respecter of persons."

4. The passages of Scripture cited to prove that "God is no respecter of persons," do not teach that he does not do more for some than he does for others.

The first is contained in Acts x. 34. The occasion of it was this. The Apostles, as Jews, under their carnal prejudices, did not suppose "the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promise of God, in Christ, by the gospel." But the Apostle Peter, having received a divine intimation to the contrary, said to the Roman Centurion, who had sent for him, "Ye know that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew, to keep company, or to come unto one that is of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Acts x. 28. And when he heard the revelation Cornelius had received, he said, "of a truth, I perceive that God is no re-

* Force of Truth, page 95.

specter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." Acts x. 34, 35. Thus teaching (not that he does not do more for some than he does for others, but) that "in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." The passage in Romans has the same meaning.

A fifth objection to predestination, is that it destroys the justice of God.

Thus say the Doctrinal Tracts, page 32: "This is the present objection against unconditional reprobation, (the plain consequence of unconditional election,) it flatly contradicts, indeed, utterly overthrows the Scripture account of the justice of God."

The Rev. R. Watson says, "It is manifestly contrary to his justice."*

Mr. Wesley says, "It destroys all his attributes at once. It overturns, both his justice, mercy, and truth. Yea, it represents the most holy God as worse than the devil, as both more false, more cruel, and more unjust."†

Let us see. In the Doctrinal Tracts they say, page 246, "We are all born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and all sin deserves eternal misery."

Mr. Watson says, "The full penalty of Adam's offence passed upon his posterity. A full provision to meet the case is indeed made in the gospel, but that does not affect the state in which men are born."

In the Minutes of the Fourth Annual Conference, of the Methodists of England, of which Mr. Wesley was the soul, in answer to the question, "Can an unbeliever (whatever he be in other respects,) challenge anything of the justice of God? they say absolutely

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
† Sermon on Free Grace.

nothing but hell. And this is a point which we cannot too much insist on."*

Mr. Watson says again, "The only relation in which an offended sovereign and a guilty subject could stand in mere justice, was that of a judge and a criminal capitally convicted." "The penalty of transgression is death; this is too plainly written in the Scriptures to be denied. And if it were right to attach that penalty to offence, it is most certainly righteous to execute it."

The above quotations, (which might be greatly enlarged,) are strictly Calvinistic and strictly scriptural.

In accordance with them, Dr. A. Clarke says in his Theology, page 76, "God dispenses his benefits, when, where, and to whom he pleases. No person can complain of his conduct in these respects, because no person deserves any good from his hands."

The Rev. R. Watson says, Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi., "God has a right to select whom he pleases to enjoy special privileges; in this there is no unrighteousness, and therefore in limiting these favours to such branches of Abraham's seed, as he choose to select, neither his justice nor his truth is impeached."

Again, speaking of "the new election into his church of believers, both of Jews and Gentiles," he says in the same chapter, "God had the unquestionable right of forming a new believing people, not of Jews only, but also of Gentiles, and of filling them as vessels of honour with those riches, that fulness of glory, as his now acknowledged Church, for which he had afore-prepared them by faith, the only ground of their admission into the new covenant."

Of course then, if God "forms a believing people,

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 138.

and prepares them by faith, for admission into the new covenant," he must "select whom he pleases to enjoy" this "special privilege," and Mr. Watson tells us, that "God had the unquestionable right of forming a new believing people," &c.

The above reasoning is certainly conclusive from the premises, and the premises are undoubtedly sound, Calvinistic and scriptural.

But does not this imply the doctrine of reprobation? Let us see. The sovereign people of these United States elect their President, but in doing this, they do nothing more than they have a right to do; viz. "to select whom they please to enjoy special privileges." Nor in doing this do they make the condition of those not elected, any worse than it was before. The sovereign people of the several States elect whom they please to be their civil officers, nor in doing this do they do the non-elect any injury, or make their condition any worse than it was before. Now surely God, without being "worse than the devil," may be as sovereign and free as man, and elect whom he pleases to eternal life; nor in doing this, do the non-elect any injury, or make their condition worse than it was before.

Again, if the sovereign people of these United States do not elect a President, we will have no President; and if the sovereign people of the several States do not elect their civil officers, we will have no officers. And if God does not elect sinners to salvation, and give them spiritual life, not a sinner would be saved. The hopes then of the Church, and of a fallen world, are suspended on the doctrine of personal, sovereign, and unconditional election. Where then is the monster to destroy it, and close the gate of Paradise against all the children of Adam?

Once more. Although none but the elect can be President, and none but the elect can be civil officers,

be they never so anxious; "whosoever will, may partake of the waters of life freely," Rev. xx. 17, and "him that cometh unto Christ, he will in no wise cast out." John vi. 37.

It has already been shown that all are sinners, and that "all sin deserves eternal misery;" that "the penalty of transgression is death;" and that if it were right to attach that penalty to offence, it is most certainly righteous to execute it." Where then is the unrighteousness towards the guilty, "in passing them by," according to the Confession of Faith, "and ordaining them to dishonour and wrath for their sin?

Does this "make God worse than the devil, more false, more unholy, more unjust," because Presbyterians teach it? Is Calvinism to be tolerated no where out of the Methodist Church?

The following remarks of Dr. Thomas Scott are so excellent, that I will take the liberty of transcribing them:

"If sinners deserve the punishment inflicted on them, it cannot be unjust in the great Governor of the world to pre-determine their condemnation to it. The contrariety to justice and goodness, if there be any, must certainly be found in the Lord's actually dealing with his creatures, and not in his pre-determination thus to deal with them. It could not be inconsistent with any of the divine attributes, for the Lord from all eternity to decree to act consistently with all of them. The clamours excited against predestination, if carefully scrutinized, are generally found to be against the thing decreed, and not against the circumstance of its having been decreed from eternity. The sovereignty of God, when duly considered, appears to be nothing more than infinite perfection determining and accomplishing everything in the best manner possible; and infallibly performing the counsels of everlasting knowledge and wisdom, justice,

truth, and love, notwithstanding all the plans and designs of innumerable voluntary rational agents, which might seem incompatible with them: nay, performing those counsels even by means of these voluntary agents, in perfect consistency with their free agency and accountableness; but in a manner which we are utterly incapable of comprehending."*

But says Dr. Fisk, "All who hold to the unconditional election of a part of mankind to eternal life, must, to be consistent with themselves, take into their creed the horrible decree of reprobation. They must believe that in the ages of eternity, God determined to create men and angels on purpose to damn them eternally."†

"Unconditional election I cannot believe," says Wesley, "not only because I cannot find it in Scripture, but also because it necessarily implies unconditional reprobation."‡

To this we reply,

1. That personal, unconditional election (as we have seen) is taught in books published by, and endorsed by the General Conference.

2. That the Doctrinal Tracts of the Methodist Church, do teach the doctrine of reprobation in connection with the doctrine of election. Thus on pages 139, 140, they say, "The Scriptures tell us plainly what predestination is: it is God's fore-appointing obedient believers to salvation, not without, but according to his foreknowledge of all their works from the foundation of the world. And so likewise, he predestinates or fore-appoints all disobedient unbelievers to damnation, not without, but according to his foreknowledge of all their works from the foundation of the world."

* Force of Truth, page 95.
† Calvinistic Controversy, page 47.
‡ Doctrinal Tracts, page 16.

"We may consider this a little further. God, before the foundation of the world, foreknew all men's believing, or disbelieving, and according to this his foreknowledge, he chose, or elected all obedient believers, as such, to salvation, and refused, or reprobated all disobedient unbelievers, as such, to damnation. Thus the Scriptures teach us to consider election and reprobation according to the foreknowledge of God from the foundation of the world."

On these extracts I observe, in the language of another,

1. "It is asserted that some men will live and die 'disobedient unbelievers.'

2. "That God had a perfect 'foreknowledge of all their works from the foundation of the world.'

3. "It follows, that he perfectly foreknew their character, names, and number: these were certainly known, i. e., immutably certain, as God could not mistake a single name, or miscount a single unit of the precise number of 'the disobedient unbelievers' who are 'fore-appointed to damnation.'

4. "These 'disobedient unbelievers' thus infallibly known, by works, character, names, number, God has 'predestinated, or fore-appointed to damnation!'

5. "This 'predestination to damnation' of the precise number of 'disobedient unbelievers, was from eternity, or 'according to God's foreknowledge of their works from the foundation of the world.'

6. "This 'fore-appointment or refusal' of the exact number of 'disobedient unbelievers,' this decree of reprobation was passed before they were born, and, of course, 'before they had done either good or evil.' Thus 'some men are born, devoted from the womb to eternal death.' What then is the use of preaching to them, praying for them, &c.

7. "'This eternal decree' of reprobation (we are told in the same volume, page 15,) 'God will not change, and man cannot resist!' So that the Arminian decree of reprobation is not only eternal, but irresistible and unchangeable!

8. "These 'disobedient unbelievers' are thus particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain, and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished, unless God may be mistaken.

9. "'How uncomfortable a thought is this,' say the Doctrinal Tracts, 'that thousands and millions of men, without any preceding offence, or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings! How peculiarly uncomfortable must it be to those who have put on Christ? To those who, being filled with 'bowels of mercy, tenderness, and compassion, could even wish themselves accursed for their brethren's sake.'" Page 163.

When, therefore, Dr. Fisk says, "Reprobation is kept out of sight, and yet it is as heartily believed by modern Calvinists, as it was by John Calvin himself; it is taught too, but it is taught covertly,"* to make his statement true, he should have substituted Arminians for Calvinists.

And now we ask, what must be thought of those who make such an outcry about the difficulties of Calvinism, who at the same time avow such a scheme as they give us?

But says Dr. Fisk in his Calvinistic Controversy, page 21, "This doctrine of predestination makes God the author of sin."

Again, page 22, "It would add much to the consistency of this system, if all its advocates would acknowledge what is evidently deducible from

* Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

the premises, that God is the efficient author of sin."

As this objection is found in all Arminian writers, let these quotations from Dr. Fisk, suffice for the whole.

We have already shown that the Confession of Faith makes the distinction between the positive and permissive decrees of God, and that according to Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Dr. Clarke, and Mrs. Rodgers, who teach the doctrine of the divine decrees as it is taught in the Confession of Faith, "that distinction involves no such consequences." We therefore now state the objection that we may give one specimen of what the objectors teach themselves.

Thus the Rev. R. Watson, in his exposition of Matt. xxvi. 63, "Jesus held his peace," says, "He knew that the wisdom of God, had appointed that he should be found guilty, upon a charge which was in fact the great truth, by which he was glorified, namely, that he professed to be the Son of God."*

Now let us take the usual course of Arminian argumentation.

Christ was charged with "professing to be the Son of God." "The wisdom of God had appointed that he should be found guilty upon the charge." But if it was appointed by God that it should be, it could not be otherwise. As then Christ was condemned and slain by wicked hands," Matt. xxiii. 24, Acts ii. 23, and this was the appointment of God, God is the author of sin.

Would it not be well for Arminians to give the public an expurgated edition of their own writings?

A sixth objection to personal, unconditional election, is, that "If it be true, then all preaching is vain. It is needless to them that are elected, for

* Comment on the New Testament.

they, whether with or without preaching, will infallibly be saved. Therefore, the end of preaching to save souls is vain in regard to them. And it is useless to them that are not elected, for they cannot possibly be saved. They, whether with or without preaching, will infallibly be damned," &c.*

The Presbyterian Confession of Faith says, Chap. iii. Sec. 6, "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he by the eternal and most free counsel of his will, foreordained all the means thereto."

Accordingly, when Paul and his companions "were exceedingly tossed by a tempest, and neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and all hope that they should be saved was taken away, Paul, after a long abstinence, stood forth in the midst of them and said: I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of God . . . saying, fear not Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar, and lo! God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."†

From this it appears that Paul and his companions were elected to be saved; and this having been announced by an angel of God, was infallibly certain. Yet when the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, and had let down the boat into the sea, under colour, as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion, "Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved." Now suppose an Arminian objector had been present, wonld he not have exclaimed, What do you mean Paul? Did you not just tell us we should all be saved; and that an angel had told you so? What matters it, therefore, whether these go or stay? If we are to be saved we will be saved.

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 159.

† Acts xxvii. 18, &c.

"Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God." "As God hath appointed salvation as the end, so hath he by the eternal, and most free counsel of his will, foreordained all the means thereto." These sailors are necessary to manage and take care of the ship. "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The centurion believed Paul—the sailors were retained in the ship until the proper time, and then "they that could swim first cast themselves into the sea, and got to land, and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they all escaped as the angel declared."

The above case, it is true, refers to an election to salvation from a temporal death, but the same principle holds good in reference to an election to salvation from eternal death.

Luke, speaking of Paul's ministry at Antioch, says, Acts xiii. 44—48, "And the next Sabbath-day, came almost the whole city to hear the word of God; . . . and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

"As many as were ordained to eternal life"—there is election. "Believed"—there is faith consequent upon their election, and so election is not conditional, or on account of faith. "Almost the whole city came to hear the word of God"—there is the preaching of the gospel, the appointed means by which "as many as are ordained to eternal life believe."

The same writer speaking of the preaching of the same Apostle, amid great opposition at Corinth, says, Acts xviii. 7, &c., "Then spake the word of the Lord to Paul, in the night by a vision, saying 'Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city."

"I have much people in this city"—there is election. "Speak and hold not thy peace"—there is

the gospel, the appointed means to bring the elect to Christ.

Rev. Richard Watson, commenting on this passage, says, "It may mean, that there were many serious and well disposed inquirers among the Greeks at Corinth," who "manifested their readiness to receive the gospel when the Jews opposed and blasphemed. And it is not improbable that to such proselytes, who were in many places a people prepared of the Lord, reference is made when our Saviour, speaking to Paul in this vision, says, 'I have much people in this city.'"*

To this we reply, that, "it may mean," "and it is probable," are grounds too slight to set aside the obvious meaning of a passage of Scripture.

Again, 2 Tim. ii. 10, "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

The distinction between "the salvation that is in Christ Jesus," and "eternal glory," shows that the former refers to what takes place in time, and the latter to what takes place in eternity.

"That they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus." This teaches that election takes place before the elect have obtained that salvation, and so is not on account of it. "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain," &c. There is the appointed means that the elect may obtain it. "For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Rom. x. 13, 14. Thus we see the Confession of Faith sustained by the Bible.

We have already seen that the doctrine of personal

* Theological Institutes, pp. 509, 510.

unconditional election is as distinctly taught in the Methodist Church as it is in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. Accordingly we find that denomination, in accordance with that Calvinistic doctrine, "enduring much for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." As then, the objection which they urge as Arminians is in the face of their Calvinism, their practice, and the Scriptures, it must fall to the ground. We will, therefore, proceed to a seventh objection.

Thus they say in their Doctrinal Tracts, page 91, "Is a man careless, and unconcerned, utterly dead in trespasses and sins? Exhort him (suppose he is of your opinion) to take care of his immortal soul. I take care! says he. What signifies my care? Why, what must be, must be. If I am elected, I must be saved, and if I am not, I must be damned."

"If I am one of the elect then I must and shall be saved; therefore, I may safely sin a little longer, for my salvation cannot fail."*

"Man need do nothing but wait for irresistible grace, which, if he be elected, will come, though it be but in the last hour; and if he be reprobated, will never come, be his diligence and waiting what it can."†

In reply to this, we may remark, first, that as to irresistible grace, that has been shown to be not a doctrine of the Presbyterian, but a hyper-Calvinistic doctrine of the Methodist Church. Secondly, we have seen also where the doctrine of reprobation of right belongs. Divested of these doctrines of the Methodist Church, the objection involves, first: "The absurdity of supposing the accomplishment of an event without the means by which it is to be accomplished. As if I should say, if I am to go to London,

* Doctrinal Tracts, p. 9. † Ibid. p. 100.

I shall go to London, whether I embark on a vessel or not. Or if we are to have a pleasant day to-morrow, we shall have a pleasant day to-morrow, whether the sun shall rise or not. Absurdity is thus stamped upon the face of the objection. Those who reach London must pass over the ocean; and if there be a pleasant day, the sun must rise. So those who are elected to salvation, as the end, must be prepared for it by 'the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, as the necessary means for the attainment of that end.' 'As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he foreordained all the means thereto.'"

2. "This objection is not acted on in similar cases. Does the farmer say, if I am to have a crop this year, I will have a crop whether I cultivate my grounds or not? Does another man say, If I am to be rich, I shall be rich, whether I make any effort or not? Does the sick man say, if I am to get well, I will get well whether I take medicine or not? Oh no! they do not say so. And here it may be remarked, there is a passage of Scripture just in point. Job, speaking of man's temporal life, says, 'his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.' Job xiv. 5.

"But does the sick man say, since 'my days are determined, the number of my months is with him, he has appointed the bounds of my life that I cannot pass;' I will, therefore, send for no physician, take no medicine, nor make any effort to protract my life? If I am to die of this disease, I must die, do what I will; and if I am not to die of it, I cannot die, do what I may? Does the sick man say so? O no! but he rather reasons thus: I know that God, as an infinite being, must know all things, and of course he must know the day of my death. But I have observed that there is generally a connection between the means and the end. I have seen persons die, evidently for want

of medical aid; and I have seen persons at the point of death restored to health, evidently by medical skill. This is enough for me. 'The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.' Deut. xxix. 29. This is enough. It is perfectly rational in the one case, why not in the other also?"*

7. "This doctrine (of predestination) destroys the free agency, and of course the accountability, of man."† "I object to the doctrine of decrees, as held by the Calvinists, because it is inconsistent with, and destructive of the free agency of man. The opposers of Messrs. Wesley and Fletcher violently assailed them on this head. Mr. Southey informs us, in his Life of Wesley, that the Calvinists called the doctrine of free will 'a cursed doctrine'—'the most God-dishonouring, and soul-destroying doctrine'—'one of the prominent features of the beast'—'the enemy of God'—'the offspring of the wicked one'—'the insolent brat of hell.'"‡

To this we reply,

1. It is admitted by Arminians, that this objection applies with equal force against the Divine Omniscience; and to this objection they give a Calvinistic and very satisfactory answer.§ It is, therefore, for them to say, why they urge it against the divine decrees only.

2. It was not "free will" in the sense of free agency, that Calvinists opposed, but "free will" according to the Arminian idea of a self-determining power of the will. Calvin, in his answer to Pigius, says: "With regard to the word, I repeat here what

* Dr. Baker's Revival Sermons, pp. 295, 296.
† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
‡ Foster's Objections to Calvinism, page 36.
§ See Chap. VII.

I have said in my Institutes, that I have no such superstitious dependence upon terms, as to contend about them, supposing that the knowledge of the doctrine to which they refer be preserved safe and uncorrupted. If force be opposed to freedom, I acknowledge and will affirm, that there is a free will, a will determining itself, and proclaim every one who thinks otherwise, a heretic. Let the will be called free in this sense, that is, because it is not constrained or impelled irresistibly from without, but determines itself by itself, and I will no longer dispute."*

Such, then, were Calvin's views. We will hear next from the Westminster divines. Their views on this subject were the views of Calvinists in the days of Messrs. Wesley and Fletcher, and ever since. "God," say they, "hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good or evil.

"Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it.

"Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good, accompanying salvation: so as a natural man being altogether averse from that which is spiritually good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereto."†

Next we will hear from the Arminians, and first from Arminius himself.

"This is my opinion concerning the free will of man: in his primitive condition, as he came out of the hands of his Creator, man was endowed with such

* Henry's Life of Calvin, Vol. I. Chap. ix. page 497.
† Confession of Faith, Chap. IX. Sec i. ii. iii.

a portion of knowledge, holiness, and power, as enabled him to understand, esteem, consider, will, and to perform the true good, according to the commandment delivered to him: yet, none of these acts could he do, except through the assistance of divine grace. But in his lapsed and sinful state, man is not capable of and by himself, either to think, to will, or to do, that which is really good: but it is necessary for him to be regenerated, and renewed in his intellect, affections, or will, and in all his powers, by God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, that he may be qualified rightly to understand, esteem, consider, will, and perform whatever is truly good."*

Next we will hear the General Conference. "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own strength, and works, to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing" (that is, preparing) "us that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will."†

Thus it will be seen that Arminius, and the Articles of the Methodist Episcopal Church go (if anything) farther than Calvin and the Confession of Faith, and yet Arminians charge Calvinism with taking away free agency from man.

That the divine decrees are true, has been reduced to a demonstration:‡ and that man is a free agent, is a matter of consciousness. But although we have no doubt that things which are true apart, will be true when brought together, yet how to supply the connecting link, Calvinists do not know, and Revelation does not inform us. We have never met with more

* Life of Arminius by Bangs, p. 224.

† Articles and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Chap. viii.

‡ See Chap. VIII.

than two sensible men, who thought they could remove the difficulty.

The following remarks of Rev. R. Watson are so sensible that we must by no means omit them. Speaking of the government of God, he says, "A second character of this government is, that, notwithstanding its sovereignty and certainty, it interferes not with human liberty. This is a doctrine as clearly stated as the former, (viz. that it is sovereign and uncontrolled). If by freedom it were meant that man were left wholly to himself, that no influence is exerted over him, no directions given to his thinkings and motives, the doctrine could not be maintained consistently with the sovereignty of God; but this insulated situation is not necessary to constitute freedom. If we are so free from constraint, that our actions are properly our own, we have the freedom of moral agents. This is taught in Scripture. We shall be rewarded or punished for our actions, and they are therefore properly our own. Of this we have the highest evidence of which a subject is capable, our own internal perceptions. We feel that we are free, and that we might have avoided the evil into which we have fallen, and have done the good that we have neglected. We may not be able to reconcile the sovereign control of God with the freedom of his creatures; but that does not prove the doctrine false; it only proves our own ignorance. The Scriptures assert both propositions; reason can demonstrate that they do not contain a contradiction; and if they involve difficulty, that is no more than may be affirmed of truths universally acknowledged."*

This being a point on which Arminians dwell so much, we wish to notice still another inconsistency.

Mr. Wesley says, "God doth whatsoever he

* Sermon on The Reign of God.

pleaseth in heaven and earth, and in the sea and all deep places . . . only he that can do all things else, cannot deny himself: he cannot counteract himself and oppose his own work. Were it not for this (viz. destroying free agency) he would destroy all sin with its attendant pain in a moment. He would abolish wickedness out of his whole creation, and suffer no trace of it to remain."*

The Rev. N. L. Bangs says, (as we have seen) "To say that the power of God was adequate to have prevented man as a free agent from sinning, is a contradiction."

The Rev. R. Watson says, (as we have seen) "We may confidently say, that God willed the contrary of Adam's offence, and used all means consistent with his determination to give and maintain free agency to his creatures, to secure the accomplishment of his will."

Here, then, we are taught that God cannot prevent man from sinning, without destroying his free agency, and that he cannot destroy his free agency, without denying and counteracting himself. We will now show, that these divines flatly contradict themselves in this also.

1. In regard to man as a sinner. Thus says Mr. Wesley, "If you truly fear God, you need fear none besides. He will be a strong tower to all that trust in him, from the face of all their enemies. . . . Let all earth and all hell combine against you, yea, the whole animate and inanimate creation, they cannot harm you while God is on your side. His favourable kindness covers you as a shield."†

But how can God prevent all earth and hell from harming his people, if he cannot prevent them from sinning?

* Sermon on Divine Providence. † Ibid.

2. In convicting sinners. Thus says Bishop Morris, "Though he irresistibly convicts all sinners, he irresistibly converts none."*

The Rev. R. Watson, speaking of the conversion of Saul, says, "We see where the irresistible influence terminated, and where his own agency commenced." Mr. Wesley "admits there are cases wherein the power of divine grace works as irresistibly as lightning." If then, the sinner's awakening is irresistible, what comes of his free agency while it is going on?

3. In conversion. "I believe," says Wesley, "that the grace which brings faith, and thereby salvation into the soul, is irresistible at that moment." And he "admits that in some souls, the grace is so far irresistible that they cannot but believe and be finally saved." Where then is free agency?

Thus we see, that these sticklers for free agency, notwithstanding they nullify every idea of it for which they contend, still tell us "God is determined to maintain it," and that he cannot interfere with it, without "denying and counteracting himself," &c.

A tenth objection to the doctrine of personal unconditional election, is that "it cannot be reconciled to the sincerity of God in offering salvation by Christ, to all who hear the gospel."† Nay, that "it so ill agrees with it," that "it makes the preaching of the gospel a mere mock and illusion."‡

We have already seen, that according to Arminians, "the eternal decree, concerning the elect and reprobate, is expressed in these words, viz: 'He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not, shall damned;' and that this decree God will not change, and man cannot alter;" that "from the foundation

* Sermon on The Operations of the Spirit.
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
‡ Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 42, 100.

of the world God foreknew all men's believing or not believing, and according to this his foreknowledge, he chose or elected all obedient believers as such, to salvation, and refused or reprobated all disobedient unbelievers, as such, to damnation;" that the "reason why all men have not saving faith," is because, "no man is able to work it in himself."

If then "God from the foundation of the world foreknew all men, believing or disbelieving," and by an eternal unchangeable decree, "reprobated all disobedient unbelievers, as such, to damnation" for not having the faith, they "could not work in themselves," he must not only have foreknown all the reprobate, but as they could not but sin, for want of the faith they could not create, he must have created them on purpose to damn them. Now, as soon as Arminians tell us how "it can be reconciled to the sincerity of God to offer salvation by Christ to those whom he eternally decreed to damn, Calvinists are ready to pledge themselves to remove the objections here urged against the doctrine of personal unconditional election. They themselves admit that this objection may be urged against the foreknowledge of God, and that they cannot answer it.* Why then do they direct all their artillery against the divine decrees only? Calvinists have no doubt of the infinite value of the atonement, and that it is of such a nature, and so extensive as to authorize the offer of every blessing of "the gospel to every creature"—that man is a free, moral agent, and that not to accept the offer, is a most damning sin. And though they pretend not to fathom "the deep things of God," their hearts are not frozen, nor their tongues palsied, in making the offer. When the Saviour himself has said, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." Isaiah xlv. 22. "Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely.' Rev.

* See Chap. VII.

xxii. 17. "Him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out." John vi. 37. "He that believeth shall be saved," Mark xvi. 16; and that "if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John i. 9; they do not desire to "be wise above what is written," nor to "exercise themselves in things too high for them." "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Deut. xxix. 29.

11. "It is a discouraging doctrine."*

To this objection we give the following reply of Dr. Nettleton: "Are there not," says he, "many, who are still without God, and without hope in the world? They have spent their best days in sin. All means have hitherto proved ineffectual. So many years of their probation are gone, and they are still enemies of God. Permit me to summons those individuals to the bar of their own consciences."

"What reason have you to believe that the gospel which you have heard in vain for so many years, will take effect when your hearts are still more hard? I would that you might feel the difficulty. We have no more powerful means, than those which have already been used. Now if you deny the doctrine of election, where is your hope? We will suppose the doctrine is not true—that God will leave you to do as you have done, and leave the means to operate as they have. Is this encouraging. Deny the doctrine of election and there is not a sinner in this assembly who has the least reason to conclude that he shall be saved.

"Perhaps some are displeased with this doctrine, and hope it is not true. Then let me address you on your own ground.

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 31, 32.

"Whether the doctrine of election be true or false, it is an eternal truth, acknowledged by all, 'that except ye repent, ye shall perish.' Luke xiii. 3. Strike out the doctrine of election, yet the doctrine of regeneration is true. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' John iii. 3. Strike out the doctrine of election, and let the means operate just as they have done, yet the doctrine of faith is true. 'He that believeth not, shall be damned.' Mark xvi. 16. Here is a given character which all the heirs of salvation must possess. Now you are at liberty to become Christians on the easiest scheme you can. If you will repent and believe, and be born again, you shall be saved, whatever may become of the doctrine of election. But why have you not done these, and become Christians already? Why do you stand disputing about this doctrine, when you know that you must repent and believe, and be born again, or be lost? What will your disputing about this doctrine do, when you know that you must repent and believe and be born again, or be lost! What will your disputing about this doctrine accomplish? If it be true, disputing will not alter it. Is it necessary for you to prove the doctrine to be false, before you can repent? If you will repent and believe, and be born again without it, it is high time you were in earnest on the subject. If you say you cannot repent, unless 'God grant you repentance,' Acts v. 31; xi. 18; that is the same as to say you cannot repent unless the doctrine of election is true. For if the doctrine of election is not true, it is certain that God has not determined to grant repentance to any of the human race. If this doctrine is not true, it is certain that God has not determined to grant you repentance."*

* Nettleton's Memoir, pp. 279—281.

12. A twelfth objection to the doctrine is, that it is calculated to produce carelessness and indifference.

Thus, in the Doctrinal Tracts, page 91, the careless sinner is represented as saying, "What signifies my care? Why, what must be, must be. If I am elected, I must be saved, and if not, I must be damned."

To this we reply, if it were announced to several prisoners under sentence of death, that the Governor had determined to pardon a certain number of them, and had made his selection, it would rouse in all, the most intense anxiety. Why then it should have a different tendency, when God is the Governor, and the eternal death of the soul the penalty, is not easy to conceive. In our opinion, the tendency is just the other way. The various candidates for civil office in our government, from the President down, well know they cannot all be elected. Does this lull them to sleep? O no. Having been called out by their friends they double their diligence, though sure of success. Why then may not a similar knowledge, in reference to those who are called by the gospel, lead them to use "diligence to make their calling and election sure?" 2 Peter i. 10.

Another objection to the doctrine is, that "it tends to destroy the comfort of religion, the happiness of Christianity."*

So thought not Paul; but hear him—Rom. viii. 28. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 161.

also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

So much for the doctrine; now for the comfort. "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh continual intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Such then, is the comfort which the Apostle Paul derived from the doctrine. And if such considerations are not comforting to any believer, it is difficult to conceive what would be.

But says Dr. Fisk, "It leads to Universalism and Infidelity. I have personally known numbers who have been driven by the doctrine we object to, into open infidelity."*

What a man knows, he knows; it would be more satisfactory however, to hear from these erring individuals themselves.

As to the first of these objections, viz. That "it

* Calvinistic Controversy, pp. 27, 28.

leads to Universalism," we remark, that if the doctrine of personal unconditional election leads to Universalism, we would like to know to what the Arminian notion, that "the offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual," leads. It is somewhat remarkable that the definition of the atonement here given, is one of the grand arguments urged by Universalists in favour of their doctrine, and it is an argument which no Arminian can answer.

On this point we have heard already the Rev. N. L. Bangs, we will therefore next hear the Rev. R. S. Foster.

"If Christ has absolutely paid the debt for his people, so that nothing more is necessary to acquit them from punishment—if the punishment has been inflicted and justice satisfied without anything further, then it is manifest nothing more can be requisite to free them from punishment; and so their sins cannot be punished, and they cannot therefore be in any peril when they sin."*

As to the second objection, viz. That "it leads to Infidelity," take the following from the "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon."

"Lord Bolingbroke was one day sitting in his house in Battersea, reading Calvin's Institutes, when he received a morning visit from the Rev. Dr. Church. After the usual salutations, he inquired of the Doctor if he could guess what book lay before him, and which said he, I have been studying." "No really, I cannot," replied Dr. Church. Quoth Bolingbroke, "It is Calvin's Institutes, and what do you think of these matters, doctor?" inquired his lordship. "Oh, my lord, we don't think about such antiquated stuff. We

* Objections to Calvinism, page 154.

teach the plain doctrines of virtue and morality, and have long laid aside these abstruse points about grace." "Look you, doctor," said Bolingbroke, "you know I don't believe the Bible to be a divine revelation; but they who do, can never defend it on any principle except the doctrine of grace. To say the truth, I have been almost persuaded to believe it upon this view of things, and there is one argument which has gone very far with me in behalf of its authority; that argument is, that the belief of it exists upon earth when committed to the care of such as you, who deny the only principles on which it is defensible."*

Again, "This doctrine is highly injurious to Christ our Mediator, and to the efficacy and excellency of his gospel." "It represents the righteous, the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth, as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, a man void of common sincerity."†

This is a very serious charge, to which we might give an extended reply. But as Arminians themselves refute it, we will let them speak. In Book III. Chapter iv. of the Life of Wesley, by the Rev. John Whitehead, his most intimate friend, and the most impartial and judicious of his Methodist biographers, we find the following, viz. "Experience I think will warrant the following observation. A speculative Calvinist, who, convinced of the error of his system, becomes an Arminian, so called, is in much greater danger of falling into low, mean, unscriptural notions of Christ and his salvation, than a speculative Arminian who becomes a Calvinist."

This is the statement of Mr. Whitehead, but he immediately adds, "Mr. Wesley seems to have been of this opinion." Pp. 242, 243.

* Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, pp. 98, 179.
† Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 100, 169.

According to Arminians themselves, therefore, it is Arminianism that leads to "low, mean, unscriptural notions of Christ, and of the Christian salvation," while Calvinism leads in the opposite direction.

Once more. "As directly does this doctrine tend to destroy meekness and love"—to inspire or increase a sharpness or eagerness of temper. "It naturally inspires contempt or coldness towards those whom we suppose outcasts from God." "You cannot help sometimes applying your doctrine to particular persons." "But how did it sharpen and sour your spirit in the mean time!"*

These charges are preferred by Mr. Wesley, and endorsed by the Methodist General Conference. Mr. Wesley of course would be expected to be least obnoxious to the same charge. Let us see. One of the rules he enacted for the government of the school at Kingwood, was, that the boys should not play. Referring to this in the Conference of 1783, he said—"They ought never to play."† No doubt the boys thought the author of that rule very "sour."

Let not the reader suppose this was a notion peculiar to Mr. Wesley. In 1789 the first Methodist College in America was founded in Maryland. Among "the rules and regulations which, after having been weighed and digested in the American Conferences, were introduced by Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, conjointly, into the new seminary," Rule 18, was as follows, viz.

"The students shall be indulged with nothing which the world calls play. Let this rule be observed with the strictest nicety; for those who play when they are young, will play when they are old." "The masters should prohibit play in the strongest terms."‡

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 161.
† Taylor's Wesley and Methodism, page 307.
‡ Life of Dr. Coke, pp. 123, 124.

Paul says, "When he became a man, he put away childish things." 1 Cor. xiii. 11. But verily, Messrs. Wesley, Coke, Asbury, and the Conferences, thought differently. We wonder if they may not have recommended to farmers to pen up their little lambs for a like reason.

As this objection is urged against Calvinists, we may say a word for Calvin. "Morus says, with justice, (that) in him were united virtues almost contradictory. To zeal and indignation, he joined a cheerful, and even mirthful temper, which none can deny but those who judge him rather by the pallid countenance, than by his words and acts. We have learned from credible persons that he made no scruple of joining in a sportive game with Messieurs, the Magistrates. It was, however, the harmless game called *La Clef*, which turns on one's ability to push certain keys to the furthest distance possible on a long table."*

But we are not to suppose Arminians are always "sour." This is evident from what Mr. Wesley says of himself and his brother Charles. "I was a little surprised," says he, "at some who were buffeted of Satan in an unusual manner, by such a spirit of laughter as they could not resist, though it was pain and grief unto them. I could scarce have believed the account they gave me, had I not known the same thing ten or eleven years ago. Part of Sunday my brother and I then used to spend walking in the meadows and singing psalms. But one day, just as we were beginning to sing, he burst out into a loud laughter. I asked him if he was distracted; and began to be very angry, and presently after, to laugh as loud as he. Nor could we possibly refrain, though we were ready to tear ourselves in pieces, but we were forced to go home without singing another line."†

* Biblical Repertory, Vol. IX., page 82.
† Works, Vol. III. page 183.

From this we learn that some persons in Mr. Wesley's day, who thought they ought not to laugh, were seized with "such a spirit of laughter as they could not well resist." This does not at all surprise us. We once knew a man who was beset with such an idea, but although he would grasp his lips with his fingers, we have several times seen a laugh burst them open and come out in full dimensions.

Neither are we surprised that the man who thought that boys should not play, should think himself "buffeted of Satan in an unusual manner," when seized with a fit of laughter.

We were once at a camp-meeting, when from fifty to a hundred of the brethren were affected in the same way during sermon. But notwithstanding they laughed most heartily, as soon as the sermon was ended mourners were called out to be prayed for. The reader, however, should recall the Scripture which says, "Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness." James iv. 9. Still, he may be at a loss for an explanation, when he learns that these laughing brethren attributed their laughter to the influence of the Holy Spirit, while Mr. Wesley attributed his to the devil.

But it is time to return to the consideration of the objection, viz. That the doctrine of predestination tends to destroy meekness, love, &c.

Mr. Wesley, speaking to pious parents about their children, says, "In general, if they do not fear God, you should leave them as soon as is convenient. But wherever you are, take care, if it be in your power, that they do not want the necessaries or conveniences of life. As for all other relations, even brethren and sisters, if they are of the world, you are under no obligations to be intimate with them. You may be civil and friendly at a distance."*

* Sermon on Friendship with the World.

Paul lays it down as among the greatest sins of the heathen, that they are "without natural affection." Rom. i. 31. What Paul lays down as a gross sin, however, Mr. Wesley lays down as a Christian duty.

Again, speaking of "the friendship of the world, as enmity against God," he says, "It is the most excellent way, indeed the only way to heaven, to avoid all intimacy with worldly men." . . . "A few I have known, who even in this respect, were lights in a benighted land; who did not, and would not either contract, or continue any acquaintance with persons of the most refined and improved understanding, and the most engaging tempers, merely because they were of the world, because they were not alive to God. Yea, though they were capable of improving them in knowledge, or of assisting them in business. Nay, though they admired and esteemed them for that very religion, which they did not themselves experience. A case one would hardly think possible, but of which there are many instances at this day. Familiar intercourse even with these, they steadily refrained from for conscience sake. Go thou and do likewise, whosoever thou art, that art a child of God by faith. Whatever it cost, flee spiritual adultery. Have no friendship with the world. However tempted thereto by profit or pleasure, contract no intimacy with worldly-minded men. And if thou hast contracted any such already, break it off without delay. Yea, if thy ungodly friend be dear to thee, as a right eye, or useful as a right hand, yet confer not with flesh and blood, but pluck out the right eye, cut off the right hand, and cast them from thee! It is not an indifferent thing. Thy life is at stake: eternal life or eternal death. And is it not better to go into life, having one eye or one hand, than having both, to be cast into hell-fire? When thou knewest no better,

the times of this ignorance God winked at. But now thine eyes are opened; now thy light is come, walk in the light. Touch not pitch lest thou be defiled. At all events, keep thyself pure. But whatever others do, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, hear this, all ye that are called Methodists. However importuned or tempted thereto, have no friendship with the world. Look round, and see the melancholy effects it has produced among your brethren! How many of the mighty are fallen by this very thing. They would take no warning. They would converse, and that intimately, with earthly-minded men, till they measured back their steps again. O come out from among them; from all unholy men, however harmless they may appear; and be ye separate; at least so far as to have no intimacy with them. As your fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, so let it be with those, and those only, who at least seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity. So shall ye be in a peculiar sense, my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

He had before laid it down as the religious duty of parents, "if their children do not fear God, to leave them as soon as is convenient;" that brothers and sisters are under no obligation to be intimate with their brothers and sisters "if they are of the world." Now he says, "the only way to heaven, is to avoid all intimacy with worldly men," and he urges it upon Methodists especially "for conscience sake not to contract or continue any acquaintance with such persons, even when they are of the most refined and improved understanding, and the most engaging manners."

So preached John Wesley, a prince among Arminians, and yet raised an objection to Calvinism, which

* Sermon on Friendship with the World.

has been endorsed by the General Conference of the Methodist Church, viz. that "it naturally inspires contempt or coldness toward those whom we suppose outcasts from God."

Mr. Wesley, a little previous to what we have quoted, says, "An individual of fine and strong understanding improved by education," "remarkably good humoured," of a "compassionate and humane spirit, and much generosity of temper, is on these very accounts, if he does not fear God, infinitely the more dangerous." And he adds, "O beware of them. Converse with them as much as business requires, and no more."

Then it follows, that although the gospel could rarely be supported, but for the aid it receives from refined, well educated, benevolent, law-abiding, church-attending people, these "are infinitely more dangerous" to the Christian, than those who in their dispositions, characters, and habits approach nearest to devils.

Our Saviour referring to the enmity of Jews and heathen against Christianity, and to its spread among them, said "a man's foes would be they of his own household." Mr. Wesley however would put the sword into the Christian's hand.

Christ taught again, that his disciples "are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world;" and that their light should not be covered, nor the salt kept to preserve itself merely. Mr. Wesley however would have the salt to itself, and the light under a bushel.

Because men are Christians they do not cease to be citizens, and the religion of the Bible makes them better citizens in all the relations of life. And though, like members of the same family, they may on the whole, prefer the society of their brethren, they do not think "the only way to heaven is to

avoid all intimacy with worldly men." Mr. Wesley thinks otherwise.

In the same discourse he supposes one to ask, "Must I not be intimate with my relations, whether they fear God or not? Has not his providence recommended these to me? Undoubtedly it has. But there are relations, near or more distant. The nearest relations are husbands and wives. As these have taken each other for better or worse, they must make the best of each other," &c.

This supposes that for a husband or wife to be pious, and his or her companion not pious, is an evil to be tolerated barely.

From the beginning of Methodism under Mr. Wesley, there has been a standing rule in the Methodist Episcopal Church which forbids a member to marry one who does not profess religion, or at least to be seeking it. A friend of ours was once present when a member of that communion was arraigned for having violated this rule. The accused appeared to be in deep distress; but when asked if he was not sorry for having married that woman. "No, I ain't," was the prompt reply. Poor fellow, he "could find no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (For a further view of this subject see Chapter XVIII.)

He continues—"When it pleased God to give me a settled resolution to be not a nominal, but a real Christian, (being then about twenty-two years of age,) my acquaintance were as ignorant of God as myself. . I found by sad experience that even their harmless conversation, so called, dampened all my good resolutions. . . . . In consequence of this, I narrowly observed the temper and behaviour of all that visited me. I saw no reason to believe that they truly loved or feared God. Such acquaintance I did not choose. I could not expect they would do me

any good. Therefore, when any of these came, I behaved as courteously as I could. But to the question, 'When will you come to see me?' I returned no answer. When they had come a few times, and found I still declined returning the visit, I saw them no more, and I bless God this has been my invariable rule for about three-score years."

In his Works, Vol. V page 236, he says, "Let no person come into the preacher's house, unless he wants to ask a question."

Our Saviour said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark ii. 17. Mr. Wesley, however, would say, "They that are sick need not a physician, but they that are whole. I came not to call sinners, but the righteous to repentance."

Of our Saviour it was said, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them;" and that "he had gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner," &c. But verily Mr. Wesley was resolved that this should not be said of him, or of the Methodists.

Again, he says to the members generally, "Invite no unholy person to your house" (and) "on no occasion accept an invitation from an unholy person."* Our Saviour, on the contrary, when "a pharisee besought him to dine with him, went in and sat down to meat." Luke xi. 37. The Apostle Paul urged Christians to "be given to hospitality,"† and the Apostle Peter urged ministers to "be ensamples to the flock;"‡ Mr. Wesley, however, differed not with our Saviour only, but with his Apostles also.

In his sermon on "Leaving the World," he insists not only that "it is dangerous" (for the pious) "to

* Sermon on the Friendship of the World.

† Rom. xii. 13.

‡ 1 Pet. v. 3.

converse with any who do not love God, or at least fear him and sincerely seek his kingdom and righteousness," but says, "Come not near him, for it is not his reasonings or persuasions only that may infect your soul, but his breath is infectious."

What a leprosy, therefore, our Saviour and his disciples must have contracted when they "sat down to meat with many publicans and sinners." Matt. ix. 10. When Paul and his companions, on their journey to Italy, escaped from the wrecked vessel to Melita, they were received by "Publius, the chief man of the island, and lodged courteously three days." Acts xxvii. 7. Now, if Mr. Wesley had been there, he, no doubt would have whispered to Paul, "On no occasion accept an invitation from an unholy person." "Come not near him, for not his reasonings or persuasions only, but his breath is infectious."

That we may see how far Mr. Wesley went on this subject, it is proper to state, that in a letter to Mr. Fletcher, dated March 20th, 1768, he urged upon him not the unprofitableness only, but the positive injury of hearing the sermons, or keeping the company of those not "athirst for full redemption (entire sanctification) and every moment expecting it, if not enjoying it."*

Let not the reader suppose we are raking up the old repudiated notions of Wesley, merely. In 1849, there was a volume of sermons, by Bishop Maris of Ohio, "published in Cincinnati for the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the sermon on "Religion," the Bishop says, "A Christian must keep . himself unspotted from the world, refusing . *any* familiarity with the society of the world further than is *strictly* necessary to transact lawful business with, and reclaim them from sin and ruin." See 1 Cor. v. 9—11.

* Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, Vol. II. pp. 233, 234.

What a relief, just here, is the following from Dr. Franklin. After saying, "I was *intimately* acquainted with Whitefield, who used to pray for my conversion," he says, "Ours was a more civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted till his death. The following instance will show on what terms we stood. Upon one of his arrivals in Boston, from England, he wrote me, that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he might lodge, as he understood that his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, had removed to Germantown. My answer was, "You know my house, if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He replied, "If you make this kind offer for *Christ's sake*, you will not miss your reward." I returned, "Do not let me be mistaken. It was not for Christ's sake, but for yours."* It is necessary to add only, that Whitefield was a Calvinist.

From what has been adduced already, it was evidently the design of the founder of Methodism, and from what we are about to adduce, it will be manifest that the Methodist Episcopal Church now desires, to be "a peculiar people" unto themselves. Hence the General Conference have laid down the following among their rules of Government, viz. "Let it be recommended to our people not to attend the singing-schools which are not under our direction."† "It is expected of all who continue in these (united) Societies, that they continue to evidence their desire of salvation by (among other things) buying one of another, helping each other in business, and so much the more because the world will love its own."‡

So then, one of the ways an individual is to "evi-

* Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, Vol. II. p. 276.
† Discipline, Chap. i. Sec. xxv. Rule 14, Edition 1844.
‡ Ibid. Chap. ii. Sec. i. Rule 5.

dence his desire of salvation," is by buying of Methodists only, and helping them in their business.

Again, they say, "Let no person that is not a member of our Church be admitted to the communion without examination, and some token given by an elder or deacon."*

Although then, they receive into their church from the world, members on probation, and admit them to the Lord's supper without examination, whether they profess conversion or not, this rule imperatively requires them to examine the members of other denominations before they admit them to the same privilege. It therefore supposes that an individual, by uniting with any other than the Methodist Church, receives thereby a positive injury, and that mere worldlings are better off.

But again, Mr. Wesley says, "If I come into a new preaching-house and see the men and women (sitting) together, I will immediately go out."†

From this it appears he was so "sour," that if families sat together in the house of God, as they sat at home, he would not preach to them. Surely then, Arminians are among the last people on this earth, who ought to charge it upon others that their doctrine tends to "sharpen and sour their spirits," "to destroy meekness and love," and to "inspire contempt and coldness towards those whom we suppose outcasts from God." If any infidel writer has advanced sentiments more at war with Christianity than what has been laid down as the duty of pious parents towards their unconverted children—of a pious brother or sister towards a brother or sister not pious—intercourse with the world—hospitality, &c., he has never come under our notice.

* Discipline, Chap. i. Sec. xxiii. Question 1st, Answer 2d.
† Works, Vol. V. page 253.

That the doctrine of election has a tendency exactly the reverse of that charged against it, is evident from the language of Paul: "Put ye on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any. Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Col. iii. 13; 1 Cor. v. 9—13.

Another objection to the doctrine under consideration is, that it "has a manifest tendency to destroy holiness in general;" and "not only Christian holiness, happiness, and good works, but also a direct and manifest tendency to overthrow the whole Christian revelation." "It represents our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, the righteous, the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth, as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, a man void of common sincerity." "It destroys all his (the Father's) attributes at once. It overturns both his justice, mercy and truth. Yea, it represents the most holy God as worse than the devil, as both more false, more cruel, and more unjust."*

In Mr. Wesley's Works, Vol. V., page 238, we have the following, viz.

"*Question.* What is the direct antidote to Methodism, the doctrine of heart holiness?

"*Answer.* Calvinism. All the devices of Satan for these fifty years have done far less toward stopping this work of God than that single error." . . .

"*Q.* What can be done to guard against it?"

"*A.* 6. Very frequently, both in public and private, advise our people not to hear them."

"*A.* 7 Make it a matter of constant prayer that God would stop the plague."

In the same volume, page 241, we have the follow-

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 160, 165, 167, 170, 171.

ing as in part, the character of a Methodist, viz. "But as to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think, and let think."

Of course then, as "Calvinism is a device of Satan"—"the direct antidote of heart holiness," and "which has done more towards stopping that work of God than all his other devices for fifty years;" it "strikes at the root of Christianity," and is by no means to be tolerated. Accordingly, the Rev. N. L. Bangs, speaking of Calvinism and Universalism, says expressly, "Of the two systems, Universalism is less dishonourable to God."* And therefore, neither Socinianism, Universalism, Popery, nor Infidelity, is treated by Arminians with a tenth part of the severity or injustice that Calvinism is. To guard against it, Methodists were advised by the Conference, as we have seen, not to hear Calvinists preach. In 1773, there being great confusion among the societies of Mr. Wesley in Ireland, there was a great call in that country for Calvinistic preachers. The Rev. Thomas Jones and the Rev. Mr. Hawkesworth, were accordingly sent over by Lady Huntingdon, the latter of whom met with considerable encouragement in Limerick and Waterford. A Mrs. Bennis, writing to Mr. Wesley, says, "Mr. Hawkesworth, a Calvinistic minister under Lady Huntingdon, has come here, and preaches regularly at Methodist hours, to great congregations. . Our people, though forbidden by the preachers, go almost constantly to hear him. I have heard his discourses so praised that I did wish to hear him, but would not show the example."

Mr. Wesley, in his reply, says, "It is far better for our people not to hear Mr. Hawkesworth. Calvinism will do them no good."†

* Reformer Reformed, page 172.

† Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, Vol. II. pp. 164—166.

Here then we see the efforts that were made to carry out the advice of the Conference.

But to the objection as to the tendency of Calvinism. Is it well founded? "All Christians admit there is an inseparable connection between religious faith and sound morality, and that wherever scriptural truth is embraced, the uniform effect is to promote virtuous feelings and conduct. It is admitted, also, that the moral tendencies of religious error are bad in proportion to the greatness of the error. No more conclusive evidences of the falsity of Paganism, Deism, Mohammedanism and Popery can be presented to the reflecting mind, than that afforded by their corrupt fruits." If then Calvinism tends to destroy holiness, happiness, good works, and to overthrow the whole system of revelation—if "it represents the Lord Jesus as a deceiver and hypocrite"—if "it destroys all the attributes of God at once, and represents him as worse than the devil, more false, more cruel, more unjust"—if, in short, "it is the direct antidote of heart holiness, and has done more toward stopping this work of God than all the devices of Satan for fifty years," its effects on those who embrace it and on the communities where they live, will be to make them like the being whom they worship, "worse than the devil." Let us see. "From the earliest ages," says the British Encyclopedia, in an article written by no Calvinist, "they (Calvinists) have excelled in no small degree, in the practice of the most rigid and respectable virtues, and have been the highest honour to their own age, and the best models for imitation in any age."

Let us now see, if this general statement is not true.

It will not be denied that Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, who lived in the latter part of the fourth, and the beginning of the fifth centuries, held the doctrine

of divine foreordination, and its kindred doctrines, now called Calvinistic. That his labours and writings, more than those of any other man in the age in which he lived, contributed to promote sound doctrine, and the revival of true religion, no candid man acquainted with the history of the Church will deny. In his day the Pelagian heresy arose, and threatened to spread its withering influence over the Church. "To him," says the learned Mosheim, "is principally due the glory of having suppressed this sect in its birth." In the midst of this controversy, Augustine delivered his views on "the necessity of divine grace, in order to our salvation, and the decrees of God with respect to the future condition of men." Shortly after this, when certain Monks advanced the doctrine so often charged upon Calvinists, "that God not only predestinated the wicked to eternal punishment, but also to the guilt and transgression for which they are punished, and that thus both the good and the bad actions of all men were determined from eternity, and fixed by an invincible necessity," Augustine made as decided opposition to this doctrine as to Pelagianism, "and explained his true sentiments with more perspicuity, that it might not be attributed to him."* The same historian, who was not a Calvinist, says—"The fame of Augustine filled the whole Christian world; and not without reason, as a variety of great and shining qualities were united in the character of that illustrious man. A sublime genius, an uninterrupted and zealous pursuit of truth, an indefatigable application, and invincible patience, a sincere piety, and a subtle and lively wit conspired to establish his fame upon the most lasting foundation."†

"The youth of Augustine," says Gibbon, "had been

* Church History, Vol. I. Part II. p. 372. † Ibid. p. 380.

stained by vices and errors which he so ingenuously confesses; but from the moment of his conversion, to that of his death, the manners of the Bishop of Hippo were pure and austere."*

It is true, the testimony of Mr. Wesley is at first the opposite of these, but in the end he fully sustains what has been advanced. "I would not affirm," says he, "that the arch heretic of the fifth century (as plentifully as he has been bespattered for many ages,) was not one of the holiest men of that age, not excepting St. Augustine himself (a wonderful saint! as full of pride, passion, bitterness, censoriousness, and as foul-mouthed to all that contradicted him, as George Fox himself.") . . . . 'But St. Augustine says:'—When Augustine's passions were heated, his word is not worth a rush. And here is the secret. St. Augustine was angry at Pelagius. Hence he slandered and abused him (as his manner was) without fear or shame. And St. Augustine was then in the Christian world, what Aristotle was afterwards. There needed no other proof of any assertion, than 'St. Augustine said it.'"† If then "Augustine was in the Christian world, what Aristotle was afterwards," and the confidence reposed in him such, that "there needed no other proof of any assertion, than that Augustine said it," is it not far more probable that the word of Mr. Wesley is not worth a rush, than that of St. Augustine?

Among the earlier believers in the Calvinistic doctrine, were those eminent and honoured witnesses for the truth, the Waldenses, and Albigenses. In one of their creeds, containing a brief summary of their faith, "which" say they "hath been taught us, from the father to the son, for these many hundred years,

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. xxxiii.
† Sermon on the Wisdom of God's Counsels.

and taken out of the word of God," the second article is as follows, viz. "All that have been, or shall be saved, have been chosen of God before all worlds." The fourth article reads thus, "Whosoever holdeth free will" (that is, in the Arminian sense of a self-determining power) "denieth wholly, the predestination of God."* It is difficult to trace with certainty these wonderful people to their origin; but it is agreed on all hands, (Papists excepted) that no people have so long and so firmly held on to evangelical faith, and sound morality, against the most protracted and cruel persecutions. When the glorious Reformation of the sixteenth century commenced, Dr. Fisk, of the Methodist Church, tells us, "these scattered adherents to the faith once delivered to the saints, were prepared to give aid and influence to the first general struggle that was made to reform the impurities of the Church."†

The martyrs of Protestantism have been almost exclusively drawn from the bosom of the Reformed Churches, rarely from the Arminian communions. A century before Luther was born, John Huss was consigned to the flames by the Council of Constance, on charge of teaching, among other heresies, the doctrines of predestination and the perseverance of the saints. The charge was clearly sustained, for he had written in his book, that "no part or member of the church doth finally fall away, because the charity of predestination, which is the bond and chain of the same, doth never fall away." Jerome of Prague, having avowed his faith in the preaching of Huss, was burned on the same spot by order of the same Council. The works of John Wickliffe being found by the Council to contain similar doctrines, his body, which had lain

* Perin's History of the Waldenses.
† Fisk's Travels, page 122.

forty-one years in the grave was dug up and burned. As the old historian writes—"They cast his ashes into the Swift, a neighbouring brook, running hard by; this brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main Ocean. And thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."*

But surely if the irreligious and the demoralizing effects of Calvinism have existed anywhere, we would expect to find them prominent in John Calvin, John Knox, and the places where these uncompromising advocates of that doctrine respectively laboured.

"John Calvin," Mr. Wesley says, "was a pious, learned, and sensible man," and "a great instrument of God."†

What! a man, pious, "and a great instrument of God," whose doctrine, more than "any other device of Satan for fifty years, tended to destroy holiness, happiness, good works," and to overthrow the whole Christian revelation—who "represents our blessed Lord Jesus Christ as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people," "void of common sincerity"—"destroys all the attributes of God at once, and represents him as worse than the devil, more false, more cruel, more unjust." Verily, if the position laid down be true, the testimony is false, or if the testimony be true, the position is false, for they are directly opposite. "After the holy Scriptures," says Arminius, "I exhort the students to read the commentaries of Calvin, for I tell them that he is incomparable in the interpretation of Scripture, and that his commentaries ought to be held in greater veneration than all that is delivered

* Dr. Humphrey's Sermon.
† Miscellaneous Works, Vol. I. II. pp. 546, 475.

to us by the ancient Christian fathers. So that in an eminent spirit of prophecy, I give the pre-eminence to him beyond them all."*

"Geneva," says Dr. Fisk, "has long been celebrated for its schools and eminent men. To have produced a Calvin and a Beza is honour enough of this kind for one city."†

"Calvin," says D'Aubigné," "with the zeal of a prophet, and the devotion of a martyr, who submits himself unreservedly to the stern word of God, exacted from the church under his care absolute obedience to her laws. He strove hand to hand with the libertine party, and by the grace of God, he remained the stronger. Geneva, formerly, so corrupt, was regenerated, and displayed a purity of manners, a Christian simplicity, which drew from Farel, after an absence of fifteen years, a shout of admiration, and these remarkable words, "I would rather be the last in Geneva, than the first anywhere else." "And fifty years after Calvin's death, adds D'Aubigné, "Jean Valentin, a fervent Lutheran, having passed some time within our walls, said on his return, "What I have seen, I shall never forget, and I shall ardently desire to retain it all my life. The fairest ornament of that republic, is its tribunal of manners, which makes inquiry every week into the disorders among the citizens. Games of cards, and chance, oaths, blasphemies, impurity, quarrels, hatreds, deceits, infidelities, drunkenness, and other vices are suppressed. O! but this purity is a beautiful ornament of Christianity! We (the Lutherans) cannot shed tears enough over that in which we are wanting. If the difference in doctrine did not withdraw me from Geneva, the harmony of its manners

* Calvin on Romans, American edition, Preface.

† Fisk's Travels, page 416.

would have retained me there for ever."* Montesquieu had reason, therefore, to say that "Geneva ought to celebrate with gratitude the day when Calvin came within her walls."†

We will now take a very brief notice of John Knox and Scotland. To enter largely into what might be, and what ought to be said of the influence of Calvinism here, would extend this chapter to too great length. "This that Knox did for his nation," says his illustrious countryman Carlyle, "we may really call a resurrection as from death. . . . . He is the one Scotchman to whom, of all others, his country and the world owe a debt. He has to plead that Scotland would forgive him for having been worth to it any million. Unblamable Scotchman that needs no forgiveness," &c.‡

Next to the doctrine of the atonement, predestination was the soul of his religion, and has been the soul of the religion of that country ever since. And now for sound learning, morality, piety, and the general happiness of the people, Scotland stands pre-eminent in Europe. In 1698 the population was about one million. Of that number, "one hundred thousand," or one out of ten, according to Fletcher of Saltown, "were beggars, living without regard to the laws of God—murder and every species of disorder, vice, and crime, being common among them. Yet so great was the change wrought among them chiefly by Calvinistic religious instruction, that at the autumn courts in 1757 not a single person was found guilty of any capital crime. In the time of Howard, when the population was 1,600,000, only 34 persons were convicted of capital crimes in nineteen

* D'Aubigné's Luther and Calvin, pp. 54, 55.
† D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation, Vol. III. page 320.
‡ Lectures on Heroes, page 235.

years. The late Sir Henry Fielding, of London, says, "That during his long administration, as one of the justices of Bow street, only six Scotchmen were brought before him for trial."

Mr. Whitehead referring to the visit. of the Messrs. Wesleys to Scotland, says, "The preachers met with no riotous mobs to oppose their progress in Scotland. Here, all ranks and orders of the people, from the highest to the lowest, had long been remarkable for a decent regard to religion, and the ministerial character."*

Dr. Chalmers makes the following most powerful appeal in behalf of the moral effects of Calvinistic teaching.

"How comes it, that Scotland, which of all countries in Europe is the most signalized by the rigid Calvinism of her pulpit, should also be most signalized by the moral glory that sits on the aspect of her general population? How, in the name of mystery, should it happen that such a theology as ours is conjoined with perhaps the yet most unvitiated peasantry among the nations of Christendom? The allegation against our Churches is, that in the argumentation of our abstract and speculative controversies, the people are so little schooled to the performance of good works. And how is it, that in our courts of justice, when compared with the calendars of our sister kingdom, there should be so vastly less to do with their evil works? It is certainly a most important experience, that in that country where there is the most Calvinism, there should be the least crime—that what may be called the most doctrinal nation of Europe, should, at the same time, be the least depraved, either by their weekly profligacies or their Sabbath profanations."

"This is the peasantry of which Burnet said,

* Life of Wesley, page 216.

'they had a comprehension of matters of religion greater than I have seen among people of that sort anywhere.' "*

We come to notice next the Assembly of Westminster divines. If Calvinism is what the indictment charges, here surely we will find a body of incarnate demons. The Rev. Richard Baxter, author of the Saint's Rest, may be considered an impartial witness, as he knew many of them intimately. "They were," says he, "men of eminent learning, godliness, and ministerial ability, and fidelity. And being not worthy to be one of them myself, I may more freely speak the truth which I know, even in the face of malice and envy; that as far as I am able to judge by the information of history, and by any other evidences, the Christian world, since the days of the Apostles, has never had a Synod of more excellent divines, than this Synod and the Synod of Dort."†

Let us next hear from the Methodists.

The *Western Christian Advocate*, published in Cincinnati, Ohio, is for ability second to no other in the denomination it represents. In an editorial in that paper about the middle of November, 1853, we find the following, viz. "We must speak with profound respect of the Westminster Confession. It was the greatest work of its time, or of any previous time, for sound theological views, excepting always its peculiar teachings on the five points; and Calvin's works as a whole, are not equalled by any divine of his time; even now, they challenge the respect of the best theologians, erroneous as they are in some respects; the Form of Government of the Confession too, is the highest model as a whole, that the Christian world ever saw, since the Apostles."

* Sermon "On the Respect due to Antiquity."
† History of the Westminster Assembly, page 176.

A similar article may be found in the *Methodist Quarterly*, some four or five years ago. The sincerity of these statements is evinced by the fact that more than one half of the questions in the Larger Catechism of the Methodist Church are taken from the Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church. Surely then these men did not worship a God worse than the devil.

Oliver Cromwell was a Calvinist. No one acquainted with his history, but will admit that in religion, predestination constituted a large part of his meat and his drink. The same is true of his army also. But what was the character of that army? Hear the historian Macaulay, himself an Episcopalian. "That which chiefly distinguished the army of Cromwell from other armies, was the stern morality and fear of God, which pervaded all ranks. It is acknowledged by the most zealous royalists, that in that single camp, no oath was heard, no drunkenness or gambling was seen, and that during the long dominion of the soldiery, the property of the peaceable citizen and the honour of women were held sacred. . No servant girl complained of the rough gallantry of the red coats, not an ounce of plate was taken from the shops of the goldsmiths."*

The Rev. J. Jones of Nayland, an Episcopal Minister, and by no means favourable to the Puritans, speaking of Puritanism during the reign of Charles I. says: "The reformation of manners was remarkable —the laws against vice and profaneness were so strict, and so rigorously put in execution, that vice was forced to hide itself in corners. There was not a play acted in any theatre in England for about twenty years. Profane swearing, drunkenness, or any kind of debauchery were not heard or seen on the streets.

* History of England, Vol. I. page 114.

The Lord's day was observed with unusual reverence,"* &c. The same is admitted by the *Edinburgh Review*, 1841, where a sketch is given of the morals in England in a Calvinistic and an Arminian period, much to the advantage of the former.

Mr. Wesley in his sermon on the Trinity asks, "Who will dare to affirm that none of the assertors of absolute predestination are truly religious men? Not only many of them in the last century were burning and shining lights, but many of them are now real Christians, loving God and all mankind."

Mr. Watson says, "It (Calvinism) has mustered among its votaries many venerable names, and many devoted and holy men, whose writings often rank among the brightest lights of scriptural criticism and practical divinity."†

"The cause of morals and good order has always found them (the Presbyterians) the first to aid, and among the last to retire from its support."‡

In 1842 there appeared a letter in a religious paper against the Calvinists. A Mr. C. Adams, of Lynn, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, wrote to the editor in April 30th of that year, among other things as follows: "You, Mr. Editor, should not forget that among them (Calvinists) are some of the greatest Christian and biblical scholars now upon the stage—that among them, too, are large numbers of able, devoted, and excellent ministers, at whose feet you and myself would delight to sit and receive instruction."§

The Rev. R. S. Foster, of the Ohio Annual Conference, has written the most sophistical, unjust, heated, and wicked book against the Calvinists, that

* Presbyterian Banner, Nov. 5th, 1853.
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.
‡ Western Christian Advocate, of December 1841.
§ Watchman of the South, of 1842.

has come under the writer's notice. Yet when speaking of the Presbyterian Church, he says, "Among her ministers are some dear to me as my own brothers. In despite of her errors, I here record my firm persuasion that she has many surpassing excellencies—many which my own Church may well and wisely emulate."*

There is published in the proceedings of a late meeting of the Alumni and friends of Washington College, Pennsylvania, a letter from the Hon. Henry A. Wise, addressed to a committee of the College, which had invited him to be present on the occasion. From this letter we make an extract, to show that the aim of Presbyterians is to diffuse around all their institutions the same healthful moral atmosphere which Mr. Wise so highly commends, when he speaks of his Alma Mater, in 1854:

"Thirty-one years ago last October, before I had reached the age of twenty years, I went to Washington, and entered the Sophomore Class in College, a wild Virginia youth, not 'free frae monie a blunder and foolish notion.' To me, a stranger, indeed, it was a 'strange land'—unlike any other I had ever seen before. The whole community, I found, was without exception almost a part of the College, and of the Church. Every man, woman, and child, was a moral presence in aid of police.

"There was a moral suasion in the whole atmosphere of the place, and in the whole countenance there. Preaching, and prayer, and monition met me every moment, at every turn. There was a more omnipresent eye of Christian watchfulness, a more constant frown on the social countenance against vice, than I have ever seen or ever felt elsewhere or since. It was not College discipline which restrained

* Objections to Calvinism, page 16.

us. That was parental, mild, indulgent, trusting to honour, and integrity and truth. You might, for aught of punishment or prevention by Professors, transgress, and yet you dare not. It did not seem to be natural *there* as at other places—it was not fashionable—you had no companions, no sympathy, no eclat. In three years I saw but two students who kept each other company in any sort of dissipation, and for them there was no hiding-place. Poor fellows! dear friends of mine, one of them came out from the President's room one day, weeping, and saying: 'O, this I cannot bear—his *cane* I *could* bear—if he would only cudgel me I could endure it; but I cannot bear his *love*, like that of a father, and the pain which I see I inflict on him!' It was divine chastening, that. And such was the discipline in and out of the halls of Washington College."

If then, such be the fruit which, according to the testimony of Arminians themselves, Calvinism has borne, the tree must be good, for "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Mat. vii. 17

If again, it is a sound principle, that when the testimony flatly contradicted every part of an indictment, the indictment is false; it ought to be withdrawn, therefore, on the testimony of those who make it. The testimony in this case, however, is just what the Scriptures lead us to expect. For if the people of God are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son," Rom. viii. 29, how can they have a "worse image than the devil?" If again, "he hath chosen us in Christ, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love," Eph. i. 14; how is it possible that the doctrine which teaches this, can be the "direct antidote to heart-holiness, and do more than all the devices of Satan for fifty years to stop the work of God?"

Finally: If "God hath from the beginning chosen his people through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 13, and "created them in Christ Jesus unto good works," Eph. ii. 10, it would be the strangest thing under the sun, for those thus favoured, to be engaged in what has a tendency "to overthrow the whole Christian revelation," or to "represent our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, and destitute of common sincerity." On the contrary, the Church that maintains that doctrine is the very one which might be expected to have "*many* surpassing excellencies, which others may well and wisely emulate."

Having shown that the charge of an unholy tendency in Calvinism is not true, we will inquire next, whether Arminianism is "without spot or blemish, or any such thing."

The historian Macaulay, referring to the time when Archbishop Laud flourished, says, a divine of that age, being asked by a simple country gentleman, "What the Arminians held," answered with as much truth as wit, "All the best Bishoprics and Deaconries of England."*

The same historian, referring to the same period, says, "These were days never to be recalled without a blush; the days of servitude without loyalty, and of sensuality without love."

But we will pass over much that might be said here, and come down to the days of Mr. Wesley. That we may have the true state of matters fairly before us, we will notice in the outset the characters of many of the preachers whom he appointed and continued in office, that in conjunction with himself they might root out Calvinism, reform the Church, &c. Here it is important to observe, that from the

* History of England, Vol. II. p. 74.

first formation of Methodist societies in England, until Mr. Wesley's death, except for a short interval, he claimed and exercised exclusively, the power of appointing and controlling the preachers. Thus says Mr. Wesley: "After my return from Georgia, many were both awakened and converted to God. One and another, and another, of these, desired to join with me as sons in the gospel, to be directed by me. I drew up a few plain rules, (observe, there was no conference in being!) and permitted them to join me on these conditions. Whoever, therefore, violates these conditions, particularly that of being directed by me, in the work, does, *ipso facto*, disjoin himself from me." "They have a right to disjoin themselves from me, whenever they please, but they cannot, in the nature of things, join with me any longer than they are directed by me." "As long as I remain with them, the fundamental plan of Methodism remains inviolate. As long as any preacher joins with me, he is to be directed by me in his work."*

Again, referring to a particular occasion, Mr. Wesley says, "I read in the society a paper, which I wrote twenty years ago. Herein I observed that the rules of our preachers were fixed by me, before any Conference existed, particularly the twelfth, viz. "Above all things, you are to preach when and where I appoint."†

It is true, Mr. Wesley "was prevailed upon with some difficulty" to share this power with his brother Charles, but as the former "seemed determined to be Cæsar or nothing, the latter perceiving his brother's determination, and finding that the preachers became more prejudiced against him, thought it most prudent to withdraw."‡

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 232.
† Ibid. page 231. ‡ Ibid. page 167.

Mr. Whitehead farther informs us, "that during the time Mr. Wesley, strictly and properly speaking, governed the societies, his power was absolute;" that "there were no rights or privileges; no offices of power or influence, but what were created, or sanctioned by him; nor could any person hold them, but during his pleasure;" that "the whole system of Methodism, like a great and complicated machine, was formed under his direction, and his will gave motion to all parts, and turned it this way or that, as he thought proper;" that "his influence, like a mighty torrent, gathered strength in its progress at every intermediate step between him and the people.*

Here then, we see Mr. Wesley clothed with, and exercising, as complete and absolute spiritual power over the ministers and members under his care, as was ever claimed and exercised by man. This is not surprising of one whose biographers tell us he thought that "in the honour due to Moses, he also had a share, being placed at the head of a great people, by Him who had called them," and that "Methodism is the only religion worthy of God."†

Let us inquire next, who were the preachers selected by Mr. Wesley. The first I shall notice, is the Rev. Miss Mary Bosanquet. Frequent mention is made of her preaching, in the life of Mrs. Fletcher, and once in the open air, to a congregation of "between two and three thousand people." (See page 134.) Now as she tells us, page 138, that she "did nothing but what Mr. Wesley approved," and as the sole

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 292.

† Hampson's Life of Wesley, Vol. III. pp. 30, 35. Coke's Life of Wesley, p. 520. For these quotations and references, see "Magee on the Atonement," page 98. If the reader desires to know how Mr. Wesley managed, in the first creed he made for his followers, to prevent some portions of the Scriptures, and some Articles of the Church of England from conflicting with his peculiar views, he is referred to the same author, page 100.

power of appointing the preachers was with Mr. Wesley, she must have received her appointment from him. We have thus early, notice of female preachers in the Methodist church. Whether they have been numerous at any time, the writer does not know. They have however, occasionally appeared in that denomination, till as late as 1830, and possibly later. It is true female preachers are not mentioned among the twelve Apostles of our Lord, Matt. x. 3, 4; nor among the seventy, whom he also sent out, Luke x. 1; nor in the Presbytery that ordained Paul and Barnabas, Acts xiii. 1—4. It is also true, that Paul says expressly, "Let your women keep silence in the churches;" "for it is a shame for women to speak in the church," &c. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. And it is farther true, that he enjoined Timothy to commit the ministry to men. 2 Tim. ii. 2. But it is to be remembered that Mr. Wesley undertook to introduce a new order, and assert "woman's rights."

As to the character of the preachers, let us hear Mr. Whitehead.

"Mr. Wesley knew the views, the opinions, and jealousies of the preachers concerning each other, better than any other individual could possibly know them. He had persons in all places, who continually informed him of everything of importance that was said or done. From the beginning he had stood at the head of the connection, and by general suffrage had acted as dictator in matters relating to the government of the societies. He had often found that all his authority was barely sufficient to preserve peace, and the mere external appearance of unanimity, and therefore concluded that if his authority were to cease, or not to be transferred to another, at his death, the preachers and people would fall into confusion."*

Here truly we have a state of things bad enough,

* Life of Wesley, page 217.

especially for those who had undertaken to teach the people "a better way."

1. We have the preachers so given to "jealousy," and jangling, that Mr. Wesley found it necessary to "have in all places" a police as watchful as Napoleon had in Paris in the most troublous times.

2. But notwithstanding all this vigilance, "he often found all his authority barely sufficient to preserve peace, and the mere external appearance of unanimity." It is not to be wondered at therefore, that "he feared lest at his death the preachers and people would fall into confusion." Nor was he alone in that opinion; for Mr. Whitehead, speaking of Mr. Fletcher, whom Mr. Wesley had invited to succeed him, says, "He well knew the embarrassment Mr. Wesley had met with in the government of the preachers, though he alone, under the providence of God, had given existence to their present character, influence and usefulness. He was also well acquainted with the mutual jealousies the preachers had of each other, and with their jarring interests; but above all, with the general determination that prevailed among them not to be under the control of any one man after the death of Mr. Wesley. Under these circumstances, he saw nothing before him but darkness, storms, and tempests, with the most threatening dangers, especially if he should be left alone in the office. He therefore determined not to launch his little bark on so tempestuous an ocean."*

Thus far, the "jealousies and jarring interests" of these brethren, have been confined to themselves. The question naturally arises, Did it extend farther? On this subject Mr. Whitehead says, "I am sorry to confess that there are men among the preachers, of a most violent ungovernable spirit. These if they find

† Life of Wesley, page 217.

it necessary for any particular purpose to oppose an individual, or any number of individuals of character and influence in the society, use every method in their power, both in the pulpit and out, to make him appear to the people as bad as the devil. Invention is on the rack to put the worst construction possible on everything he may say or do. Nay, they attribute many things to him, the very thought of which never entered his heart, till he found himself accused of them."*

But let us hear Mr. Whitehead again. Speaking of the state of things that followed the death of Mr. Wesley, he says, "I readily acknowledge that his absolute and unlimited power has in its consequences since his death, been a great injury to the societies. It has been the parent of a system of government highly oppressive to many individuals, and much more injurious to the rights of the people than his own. He constantly acted as a middle person between the preachers and the people, the poor as well as the rich, against any insult or oppression they might receive. At present, the preachers claim unlimited powers, both to make laws and to execute them, by themselves or their deputies, without any intermediate authority to act as a check in favour of the people. But what is much worse than all the rest, the present system of government among the Methodists requires such acts of human policy and chicanery to carry it on, as in my opinion are totally inconsistent with the openness of gospel simplicity."†

We have now seen something of the character of the preachers. As then, ministers of religion are the principal means of conveying to the people the spiritual nourishment by which they live, and the principles by which they are guided, if the adage "like

* Life of Wesley, page 230. † Ibid. pp. 293, 294.

priest, like people" be correct, we naturally expect the state of things among the people to have been bad enough. Let us see. In Mr. Wesley's Works, Vol. V page 213, we find the following, viz.

"The world say the Methodists are no better than other people. This is not true, but it is nearer the truth than we are willing to believe. For, 1. Personal religion, either toward God or man, is amazingly superficial among us. I can but just touch on a few generals. How little faith is there among us! How little communion with God! . . How much love of the world! desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money! How little brotherly love! What continued judging one another. What gossiping, evil speaking —tale bearing! What want of moral honesty. . . . Family religion is shamefully wanting in almost every branch," &c.

If then by "touching" only "on a few generals," Mr. Wesley who "knew everything of importance that was either said or done" among the brethren, could say so much, "personal religion either toward God or man," and "moral honesty" must have been "amazingly superficial" indeed! Again,

Question 13. "Do not Sabbath breaking, dram drinking, evil speaking, . . and contracting of debts without due care to discharge them, still prevail in several places? How may these evils be remedied?"

Answer 2. "Read in every society, the sermon on Evil Speaking. 3. Let the leaders closely examine and exhort every person to put away the accursed thing. 4. Let the preachers warn every society that none who is guilty herein can remain with us. 5. Extirpate smuggling, buying uncustomed goods, out of every society. . . . 6. Extirpate bribery, receiving anything directly or indirectly, for voting in any election."*

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, pp. 196, 197.

Surely then, if "Sabbath breaking," "dram drinking," "evil speaking," "contracting debts without due care to discharge them," "smuggling" and "bribery" so prevailed among the societies under Mr. Wesley's care, as to require the above action of the Conference, "the world" had reason to say "the Methodists are no better than other people."

But again. "There were times," says Southey, "when Mr. Wesley perceived and acknowledged how little real reformation had been made in the great body of his followers." "Might I not have expected," said he, "a general increase of faith, and love, of righteousness and holiness, yea, and of the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, fidelity, goodness, temperance? Truly, when I saw what God had done among his people forty or fifty years ago; when I saw them warm in their first love, magnifying the Lord, and rejoicing in God their Saviour, I could expect nothing less than that all these would have lived like angels, here below; that they would have walked as continually seeing him who is invisible, having constant communion with the Father and with the Son,—living in eternity, and walking in eternity. I looked to see a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, in the whole tenor of their conversation showing forth His praise who had called them into his marvellous light. But instead of this, it brought forth error in ten thousand shapes. It brought forth enthusiasm, imaginary inspiration, ascribing to the all-wise God, all the wild, absurd, self-inconsistent dreams of a heated imagination. It brought forth pride, prejudice, evil surmising, censoriousness, judging and condemning one another, all totally subversive of brotherly love, which is the very badge of the Christian profession, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before God. It brought

forth anger, hatred, malice, revenge, and every evil word and work, all direful fruits, not of the Holy Spirit, but of the bottomless pit. It brought forth such base grovelling affections, such deep earthly mindedness, as that of the poor heathens, which occasioned the lamentation of one of their own poets over them:

'O souls bowed down to earth, and void of God.'

And he repeated from the pulpit a remark made upon the Methodists by one whom he calls a holy man, viz. that 'never was there before a people in the Christian Church who had so much of the power of God among them, with so little self-denial.' "*

Such then is a summary of the fruits of Arminianism, during the life, and under the guidance of the prince of Arminians, as given by that prince himself. How an enemy could have added any thing to make it darker, is not easy to imagine. All that remains under this head is, that we present to the reader what Arminians say of themselves at the present time.

In the Articles of Religion, and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we have the following, page 58, viz.

"Personal religion either towards God or man, is too superficial among us. We can but just touch on a few particulars. How little faith is there among us? How little communion with God! How much love of the world! Desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money! How little brotherly love! What continual judging one another! What gossipping, evil-speaking, tale-bearing! What want of moral honesty," &c.

Thus published the General Conference in 1844. Now the interrogatories — "How little," "How much," "What want," at the beginning, with an ex-

† Southey's Life of Wesley, Vol. II. page 238.

clamation point at the close of each sentence, can allow them to convey no other meaning, than that in the Methodist Church, there is but little "faith," but little "communion with God," much "love of the world"—a great "desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money." But little "brotherly love"—much "judging of one another"—much "gossipping"—much "evil speaking"—much "tale bearing"—a great "want of moral honesty," &c. If then by "touching" only "on a few particulars" they could say so much, it is evident that if they had gone into all the "particulars," they would have made out an account at the present time, about as sad as that of Mr. Wesley. We have before seen, what were its fruits among the preachers of that system; we have now seen what are its fruits among the people. With what face then Mr. Wesley could say of Calvinism, "it is the direct antidote of heart-holiness," and "has done more than all the devices of Satan for fifty years, toward stopping this work of God," &c. is not for the writer to say. By some strange legerdemain, or otherwise, Mr. Wesley and the General Conference must have substituted Calvinism for Arminianism in the indictment.

Having noticed incidentally, a part of what Dr. Whitehead says, of the power of Mr. Wesley and the Methodist clergy over the affairs of the Church, perhaps it may not be amiss to extend our quotation a little further before we take up another objection.

"His (Mr. Wesley's) influence, like a mighty torrent, gathered strength in its progress, at every intermediate step between him and the great body of the people. Let us suppose, for instance, that on some important matter which concerned all the societies, or the nation at large, Mr. Wesley gave his orders to the assistants dispersed through the three kingdoms: these would impress them on the other

itinerants, in number together, let us suppose, three hundred. With the influence of this body, these orders would pass on to about twelve hundred local preachers in a vast variety of situations, who, in conjunction with the itinerants, would impress them on about four thousand stewards and class-leaders; and these, by personal application, might in a short time, enforce them on about seventy thousand individuals, members of the societies. In addition to this, we may suppose, the itinerant and local preachers, in the course of ten days or a fortnight, publicly address between three and four hundred thousand people, when the same matter might be further urged upon them. Now what could stand against such influence as this, so combined, diffusive, and rapid in its progress, when once put in motion? If directed against any individual in the societies, whatever might be their character or influence, their opposition could only be like pebbles before a torrent rolling down the side of a mountain; it would be swept away without being perceived."*

Such then, was the power of Methodism in the days of Wesley, as portrayed by a most intimate Methodist friend, his admirer, and at Mr. Wesley's request, his biographer. Now let it be borne in mind, that with the exception that there is not, as formerly, an archbishop at the head of the whole, it has undergone scarcely any modification since—that the church property must all be deeded to the Conferences, which Conferences are composed of preachers exclusively, having church property now under their exclusive control, to the amount of millions of dollars, that the church funds are all under the same control, and we may have some idea of the clerical power of Methodism.

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, pp. 292, 293.

But let us return to the notice of objections against predestination. Another is, that "it directly tends to destroy our zeal for good works."* But if this be true, its effects will surely be apparent in the champions who taught it. The reverse of this however has been shown to be true of Augustine of Hippo, and it is true of the Reformers generally, among whom this doctrine was held in common. No champions for it however, stood so prominent among them as John Knox, and John Calvin. The labours of Knox, though in a different sphere, were but little inferior to those of his cotemporary. In the latter part of his life, and when greatly enfeebled, "he preached twice every Sabbath, and three times during the week. He met regularly with the kirk session once a week, for discipline, and with an assembly in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, for exercise in the Scriptures. He attended the meetings of the provincial Synod, and General Assembly, and at almost every meeting of the latter, received an appointment to preach in some distant part of the country." He still preached, although he was so feeble that he had to be carried to the pulpit.†

"John Calvin was twenty years of age before he was converted from Rome to Christ. When, soon afterwards, *this* Theology struck its forces into his mind, it roused him to the utmost stretch of thought. It was like fire in his bones. So vital was this new life within him, that at the age of twenty-six he had deduced the entire system from the word of God, adjusted its elements into a master-piece of logical coherence, and published it to the world, in his immortal Institutes. The twenty-eight years of life that remained, were laden with affliction both of mind and body. Physical infirmities multiplied, until no

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 164.
† McCrie's Life of Knox, pp. 237, 324.

less than seven distinct maladies laid siege to his attenuated frame. He suffered also every private grief, even that domestic bereavement which he styled 'an acute burning wound.' It is impossible to look, without wonder, at the labours he prosecuted, amidst all this weariness and painfulness. The products of his pen exist in nine huge folios of printed matter, besides several hundred letters, and more than two thousand sermons and Theological Treatises yet unpublished. He prepared a copious commentary on most of the Scriptures, edited a French translation of the word of God; disputed by tongue and pen with Bolzec on the doctrine of predestination, with Westphal and Heskius on the sacraments, with Witsius on free will, with Pighius on free grace, and Servetus on the Trinity. He wrote against relics, astrology, the Anabaptists, the Libertines and the Pelagians. He employed his weapon of wit and sarcasm in assailing the Sorbonne, his powers of argumentation in confuting the Tridentine Decrees, and his noble eloquence in behalf of the Emperor against the Pope. He corresponded incessantly with his contemporaries, Farel, Viret, Beza, Melancthon, Knox, Cranmer, and the kings of Sweden, Poland and Navarre—projecting, by his long and masterly letters, his own intellectual and spiritual life into the leading minds of Europe. With an asthmatical cough, he lectured three days in the week on Theology, and preached daily on every alternate week. He presided at the court of morals, which met once a week, attended the frequent assembly of the clergy, assisted in settling the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of Geneva, founded there a seminary of liberal learning, and when the city was threatened with a siege, laboured at the fortifications. He educated preachers of the gospel; performed many journeys; was consulted on all important subjects; occupied the pulpits of his brethren in their

absence; visited in company with an elder, every family in the city once a year, and catechized the children. To form some idea of his activity, let us look at the letter which he wrote to Farel from Strasburgh:—'I remember no day in this whole year in which I have been so pressed with such a variety of occupations. When the messenger was prepared to take the beginning of my work with this letter, I had about twenty leaves to look through. I had then to lecture and preach, to write four letters, make peace between some persons who had quarrelled, and answer more than ten people who came to me for advice. Forgive me, therefore, if I write briefly." Besides all these things, he composed the dissensions which perplexed the Reformers, and the strifes which afflicted the churches; and aided in settling the affairs of the Reformation, in Poland, France, Germany, Scotland, and England. At last, being compelled by mortal disease to relinquish public duties, he received in his chamber all who sought his advice, and wore out his amanuenses by dictating to them his works and letters. When his shortening breath and failing voice terminated these labours, his kindling eye and heaving breast indicated that he was in constant prayer. On a beautiful evening in May, just as the setting sun was irradiating with its purple light, the waters of the Leman and Rhone, the Jura mountains, and the more distant glaciers of the Alps, this great man rested from his labours. He gave directions that his body should be buried without the slightest pomp, and that his grave should be marked by neither monument nor headstone. His commands were obeyed, and 'no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.'"

The above, with some additions, is taken from the sermon which the Rev. E. P. Humphrey preached at the opening of the Presbyterian General Assembly in

1852; and no one who has read the life of Calvin, will consider it an exaggeration. It is not wonderful therefore, that Mr. Wesley should say, "John Calvin was a wise, learned, and pious man," and "a *great* instrument of God:" and that Dr. Fisk speaking of Geneva, should say, "To have given birth to a Calvin and a Beza, is honour enough of the kind for any city."

It is true, that under the erroneous opinion of the age, and the belief, that the Jewish theocracy should be blended with the gospel, he encouraged the enforcement of some Jewish laws, which, in substance, were the laws of Geneva, in several cases of extreme immorality, and in one case of extreme heresy. But it is also true that not a writer can be found, within forty years of the time, who doubted the propriety of the proceedings.

George Whitefield was the cotemporary and friend of Mr. Wesley. The latter however, being a very zealous Arminian, and the former a decided Calvinist, this doctrinal difference interrupted their intimacy. Still it did not prevent Mr. Wesley, who survived Mr. Whitefield, from doing justice to his memory. From the funeral discourse which the former preached, in reference to the death of the latter, we make the following extract, viz.

"Have we read or heard of any person, since the Apostles, who testified the gospel of the grace of God through so widely extended a space—through so large a part of the habitable world? Have we read or heard of any person who called so many thousands, so many myriads of sinners to repentance? Above all, have we read or heard of any who has been a blessed instrument in the hand of God, for bringing so many sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God?" "O God, with thee no word is impossible! Thou dost whatsoever pleaseth

thee! O that thou wouldst cause the mantle of thy prophet, whom thou hast taken up, now to fall upon us that remain! Where is the Lord God of Elijah?"

Thus spoke John Wesley, as well he might. In a ministry of thirty-four years, Mr. Whitefield crossed the Atlantic ocean thirteen times, and preached more than eighteen thousand sermons. This, in addition to his great amount of travel, his writing, and other duties, was on an average, considerably more than a sermon for every day of his ministry. One cannot but be amazed at the great amount of his labours. Not content with the bounds of a country or kingdom, he preached in almost every considerable place in England, Scotland, Ireland, and in the Colonies of North America; and it seemed as though he never preached in vain. A cotemporary says of him, that "in the compass of a single week, and that for years, he spoke forty hours, and in very many weeks, for sixty hours; and then after his labours in public, offered up prayer and praise in every house to which he was invited, thus incessantly employing his whole strength, and as it were, every breath, in his sacred function."*

Let us now hear Whitefield himself in reference to the great moving motive. Writing to Mr. Wesley, he says, "It is the doctrine of election that mostly presses me to abound in good works. I am made willing to 'suffer all things for the elect's sake.' This makes me preach with comfort, because I know salvation does not depend on man's free will, but the Lord makes them willing in the day of his power, and can make use of me to bring some of his elect home, when and where he pleases."†

Think too, of the labours of Brainerd and Martyn,

* Venn's Sermon on the Death of Whitefield.
† Gillies' Life of Whitefield, page 638.

and a multitude like them, for the conversion of the heathen; of Rowland Hill, Philip Doddridge, Legh Richmond, Thomas Scott, John Newton, Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Davies, William Tennent, Thomas Chalmers, Edward Payson, Robert Hall, Asahel Nettleton, &c., &c., &c. Will any one say, that for ability and zeal, and efficiency, they will not compare with an equal number of the ablest Arminians that can be named?

It is worthy of remark also, that the General Conference has the biographies of the following staunch Calvinists among the standard publications of her Tract Society, viz. "Watts and Haliburton—Dickinson and Janeway—Allein—Bunyan—Oberlin and Zuingle." The last in some respects was more Calvinistic than Calvin.*

It is a very great mistake to suppose that the doctrine of predestination tends to induce inactivity. Because Alexander the Great "was sensible that he was formed to possess all things—(that) such was his destiny, in this (therefore,) he made his happiness to consist,"† and it roused him to an energy and activity and perseverance, such as the world had never witnessed. Napoleon Bonaparte frequently spoke of his "destiny" also, and here we see a similar result. "When Columbus had formed his theory of finding land by sailing to the West, it became fixed in his mind with singular firmness, and influenced his entire character and conduct. He never spoke in doubt or hesitation, but with as much certainty as if his eyes beheld the promised land. No trial or disappointment could divert him from the steady pursuit of his object. A deep religious sentiment, mingled with his

* See First Annual Report, 1854.
† Rollin, Vol. III. page 86.

meditations, and gave them at times a tinge of superstition, but it was of a sublime and lofty kind: *he looked upon himself as standing in the hand of Heaven, chosen from among men for the accomplishment of its high purpose.*"*

In our day also, we have seen a spirit of "fillibustering" roused by the "manifest destiny" of our people, such as the government can scarcely control. Nor would Arminians themselves complain, that their free agency was destroyed, or their energies paralyzed, if they could persuade themselves that they were the elect of God, predestinated from eternity to put down Calvinism.

The historian Bancroft, is therefore correct, when he says, "The political character of Calvinism, which with one consent, and with instinctive judgment the monarchs of Europe feared as republicanism, and which Charles I. declared a religion unfit for a gentleman, is expressed in a single word—predestination. Did a proud aristocracy trace its lineage through generations of high born ancestry, the republican reformer with a loftier pride, invaded the invisible world, and from the book of life, brought down the record of the noblest enfranchisement, decreed from all eternity by the King of kings. His few converts defied the opposing world as a world of reprobates, whom God had despised and rejected. They went forth in confidence, that men who were kindling with the same exalted instincts, would listen to their voice, and be effectually called into the brunt of the battle by their side. And standing serenely amid the crumbling fabrics of centuries of superstitions, they had faith in one another; and the martyrdoms of Cambray, the fires of Smithfield, and the surrender of benefices, by

* Irving's Life of Columbus, Book I. Chap. vi. page 25.

two thousand non-conforming Presbyterian clergymen, attest their perseverance."*

Having shown that Calvinism, contrary to the charge preferred against it, is a powerful incentive to zeal, let us inquire whether Arminianism has always had the same effect.

In a letter from Mr. Wesley to his brother Charles, we find the following, viz. "What is it that has eaten out the heart of half our preachers, particularly those in Ireland? Absolutely idleness; their not being constantly employed. I see it plainer and plainer."†

Surely then if Mr. Wesley, who selected, watched over, and controlled all the preachers, could speak thus of "half" of them, the state of things must have been bad enough. Again, in the minutes of the Conference of 1770, we meet with the following, viz.

Q. 23. "Why is it that the people under our care are no better?"

A. "Other reasons may concur, but the chief is, because we are not more knowing, and more holy."

Q. 24. "But why are we not more knowing?"

A. "Because we are idle," &c.‡

Before, we had the charge of idleness against "half the preachers," from Mr. Wesley, but now we have a more general charge, in reference to the same sin, from the whole Conference. "We are idle."

All that remains under this head, is to show what Arminians say of themselves at the present time. The General Conference, speaking for all their preachers in 1844, says, "In ourselves there is much dulness and laziness. . . We have a base, man-pleasing temper," &c.§

Surely then, Arminians are the last people on earth

* History of the United States, Vol. II. pp. 461, 463.
† Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 165. ‡ Ibid. page 201.
§ See Doctrine and Discipline, page 59.

to bring the charge against Calvinism, that it "directly tends to destroy our zeal for good works."

But it is objected again, that "this doctrine paralyzes the efforts of devotion and benevolence."*

Let us see. The Old-school Presbyterian Church, with 219,263 communicants, gave, in 1853, to the cause of Foreign and Domestic Missions, $234,724.16, making $1.06 on an average to each member.† The Methodist Episcopal Churches, North and South, with 1,298,767 communicants, gave to the same objects, during the same year, $338,075.00, or about twenty-six cents for each member.‡ The matter then stands thus: an Arminian gives to an object twenty-six cents, to which a Calvinist gives four times as much, and yet the Arminian says, "Calvinism paralyzes the efforts of devotion and benevolence." Added to this, it is proper to remark, that Arminians have a knack of getting hold of Calvinistic money, which cannot be said of Calvinists in reference to Arminian money, and which would considerably curtail their figures.

But, says the Rev. R. S. Foster, "Will you appeal to facts, that such is not the tendency of your system? I shall reply that they are incompetent to meet the case; that admitting them to be different from what it is alleged the system would make them, this would only prove that the system had not always worked out its legitimate results; that the bad and disastrous influence had in some instances been counteracted by the presence of some wholesome elements."§

Here it is admitted that Calvinism has produced some good fruits, but it is contended that this is un-

* Calvinistic Controversy, p. 56.
† See Minutes of the Assembly, pp. 604, 607.
‡ Almanac of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, for 1855.
§ Objections to Calvinism, page 60.

natural, and in defiance of the system. It has been shown, however, that where an Arminian gives twenty-six cents to a benevolent object, a Calvinist gives a dollar. Mr. Foster himself says, "The Presbyterian Church has *many* surpassing excellencies—*many* which the Methodist Church would do well to emulate." Mr. Wesley, on the contrary, after giving a summary of the fruits of Arminianism in his day, and under his control, said they were the "direful fruits of the bottomless pit." And the account of the General Conference in 1844, in reference to the same subject, is but little better. The matter then will stand thus. Notwithstanding Calvinism is (according to Arminians) anti scriptural and corrupt, and Arminianism pure and scriptural throughout, the former has borne good fruit, and the latter has borne bad fruit. Our Saviour taught, Matt. vii. 18, that "a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Arminians, however, reverse this, and teach that a good tree bringeth forth evil fruit, and a corrupt tree bringeth forth good fruit.

Again. Our Saviour said, Matt. xii. 23, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt, for the tree is known by its fruits." But according to Arminians this should be—Either make the tree good and his fruit corrupt, or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit good, for the tree is not known by its fruits.

Mr. Foster, after having written nearly sixty octavo pages against the alleged errors of Calvinists, without naming or alluding to any of the fruits of these errors, except "many of surpassing excellence which his own Church would do well to emulate;" says, "Calvinism has produced, and does now produce the fruits charged against it." That it is to the fruits of the system, and not to the errors, he alludes, is evident from what immediately follows, viz. "It does so, not

only in some, but in many, if not all instances, where it is not neutralized by the presence of more powerful principles of belief, existing coetaneously in the mind. It is innocent only when it is practically disbelieved."*

As then, Mr. Foster does not name any of these fruits himself, which he says, "Calvinism has produced, and does now produce," he must refer to "the fruits charged against it," in the Doctrinal Tracts, Calvinistic Controversy, Theological Institutes, &c. But if it has been so "neutralized" that "from the earliest ages Calvinists have excelled, in no small degree, in the practice of the most rigid and respectable virtues, and have been the highest honour to their own age, and the best models for imitation for every succeeding age;" if it was so "neutralized in Augustine" that he was by far the holiest and most useful man of his day—and in Calvin, so that he was "a great instrument of God"—a lasting honour to the city in which he lived, having introduced into it such a state of morals as constrained John Knox to say, "I have not seen in any other place manners and religion so sincerely reformed;" and the historian Bancroft to say, "The light of Calvin's genius scattered the mask of darkness, to which superstition had held the brow of religion for centuries before; his probity was unquestionable, his morals spotless, and when he died he left to the world a purer reformation," &c.; if it was so "neutralized in John Knox," and the Presbyterians of Scotland, that, in the language of Dr. Chalmers, "Scotland, which of all the countries of Europe is the most signalized by the rigid Calvinism of her pulpits, is also most signalized by the moral glory that sits on the aspect of her population;" if it was so "neutralized" among the Puritans of England, that "there was not a play acted in any theatre

* Objections to Calvinism, page 60.

for about twenty years; profane swearing, drunkenness, nor any kind of debauchery were seen or heard in the streets, and the Lord's day was observed with unusual reverence;" if it was so "neutralized" in George Whitefield, and a host of others, that to a remarkable degree they were "the salt of the earth," &c.; if finally, it has been so neutralized in the United States, that a Calvinist gives more than four times as much to objects of benevolence as an Arminian, and the Presbyterian Church has "*many* surpassing excellencies which Arminians would do well to emulate;" it is after all a very harmless affair.

But as Arminians hold to two sides at least of every question in the Calvinistic controversy, it is proper to hear what they have to say on the other side, also.

Mr. Adams, of Lynn, a part of whose letter has been given already, says, "You should not forget that among the Calvinists are some of the greatest Christian and biblical scholars now upon the stage; that among them are large numbers of able, devoted and excellent ministers, at whose feet you and I would delight to sit and receive instruction. Nor should you forget, that by these same heretics, almost every benevolent cause is fostered and encouraged—the largest missionary operations are carried forward, and the most vigorous efforts are made to save the world."

The Rev. Dr. Elliot, editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*, thus expressed himself in an editorial a few years ago:

"The Presbyterians of every class were prominent and even foremost in achieving the liberties of the United States. They have been all along the leading supporters of constitution and law, and good order. They have been the pioneers of learning and sound knowledge, from the highest to the lowest grade, and are now its principal supporters. The cause of morals

and good order has always found them first to aid, and among the last to retire from its support."

Finally, the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, of April, 1845, says, "These advocates of an enslaved will, are the steadfast friends of human liberty. To promote it they have always been ready to pour out their blood like water. They are the men to confront councils and kings, though there be as many devils there as there are tiles on the roofs of the houses. They are the friends of education—the publishers of the Bible—the sleepless defenders of their country's liberty—the emancipators of the press—the observers of the Sabbath—the inflexible opponents of priestly dominion—the friends of the people—the unflinching martyrs for the truth. How can we do otherwise than love them? They are worthy! They are called Calvinists, but they are Christians and freemen."

Thus spake two of the organs of the General Conference. Surely then, Calvinism does not "directly tend to destroy our zeal for good works," "nor paralyze our efforts in the work of benevolence and love."

Having noticed all the principal, and indeed very nearly every objection urged against Calvinism, in the Doctrinal Tracts, Calvinistic Controversy, and Theological Institutes, I will close this part of my work with a passage from Paul:

"For this is the word of promise: 'At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.' And not only this, but when Rebecca had also conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness in God? God forbid!"

To this plain case of sovereign unconditional elec-

tion, the Apostle supposes the objection of unrighteousness in the proceeding to be raised. To this he replies without attempting to explain the deep mystery. "God forbid." With the Rev. Mr. Watson he seems to have thought that "God has a right to select whom he pleases to enjoy special privileges," and that "in this there is no injustice." "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore, hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?"

Here Paul supposes, that as God had raised up Pharaoh for a particular purpose, an objector will ask, "Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" Or as God has expressed it by Jeremiah, "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?" Jer. vii. 9, 10. To an objection so blasphemous, the Apostle, without attempting to remove the supposed difficulty, viz. that they were "delivered to do these things," replies, "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power

known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory, on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Romans ix. 9, &c. Thus teaching that inasmuch as "God giveth not account of any of his matters," Job xxxiii. 13; and "it is his glory to conceal a thing," Prov. xxv. 2; it is the height of presumption and folly in man, to attempt to fathom the high mystery, of the propriety of which there can be no doubt. The reader will observe also, that while the Apostle represents God, as forming, like a potter, out of the same clay, "one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour," he at the same time represents him, as "enduring with *much long-suffering* the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," and "making known the riches of his glory on the vessels of *mercy* which he had before prepared unto glory." If then, these unfathomable mysteries did not perplex an inspired Apostle, they shall not perplex me. If he did not doubt the wisdom and equity of the proceeding, neither will I. If God "endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," I will be careful not to provoke him by *my* sins. And finally, if there shall be but one "vessel of mercy prepared afore unto glory," I will "use diligence to make my calling and election sure," so that if possible," I may be that "vessel."

Having noticed, so far as we are aware, all the objections which Arminians urge against the divine decrees, we will close this chapter with the notice of another objection urged against Calvinists, viz. that they do not baptize those who are awakened merely. Thus says Bishop Morris, "True penitents are proper subjects of baptism.

1. "Baptism is one of the means of grace, and

therefore suitable for penitents who need all the help they can get. So Peter understood it, as appears from the advice he gave those who were smitten under his preaching: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts ii. 37, 38.*

"Here we cannot but mark the difference between the system of some Calvinistic teachers, and that of the gospel. Their system is, 1. Conversion; 2. Repentance; 3. Pardon; and lastly, Baptism. But Peter's arrangement is, 1. Repentance; 2. Baptism; 3. Pardon; and 4. The witness of the Spirit."

Such is the hostility of Arminians to Calvinism that they not only go out of their way to give it a blow, but even then, they cannot find it in their hearts to do it fairly. Divines make a distinction between regeneration and conversion. With that distinction, what Bishop Morris lays down for Calvinists as first in the order, is, according to Calvinists themselves, the third. But to the objection—of Abraham it is said, "He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised." Rom. iv. 11. Now, if the Abrahamic covenant is the covenant of the Church, and baptism, in the Christian Church, takes the place of circumcision in the Jewish, we will find the teaching of the Scriptures in reference to baptism, to correspond with their teaching in reference to circumcision. Circumcision, was to an adult "a seal of the right-

* The reader need hardly be informed that "the gift of the Holy Ghost" does not here refer to regeneration, but to its then common miraculous influence. See Mark xvi. 17; Acts i. 5; ii. 4; viii. 14—17; xix. 1—6; 1 Cor. xii. 8—13.

eousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised." Of course, then, it would not have been proper for an adult, who was without piety, to receive it. Psalm l. 16, 17. So also in reference to baptism. When the Eunuch inquired of Philip, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip replied, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."* Although then Peter did say to those who had inquired, "What shall we do?" "Repent and be baptized," &c. it is evident from what immediately follows, viz. "with many other words did he testify and exhort" —they *gladly* received the word and were baptized" . continued *steadfastly* in the Apostles' doctrine . . all that *believed* were together . and the Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved:" we say, from this it is evident that these penitents were, at the time of their baptism, regenerated believers, and so were, according to Calvinists, proper subjects of the ordinance. Let us now have a word about the practice of Arminians on this subject.

Baptism was not required at all in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States till in 1828.† We could name one, at least, who, although he has been a communicant in that Church for more than thirty years, has never been baptized. Probably there are many others. The habit also of admitting probationers to the Lord's supper without baptism, is, so far as our knowledge extends, almost universal, notwithstanding the Scriptures say expressly in reference to the passover, "No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof." Exodus xii. 48. Further, although *one* doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church, is, that infants dying without baptism go to perdition, no

* Acts viii. 36, 37. See also Mark xvi. 16.
† Minutes of the General Conference for 1828.

Church which holds the ordinance of infant baptism, neglects it so much. Finally, although there is no authority in Scripture, or in reason, for baptizing a child unless one of the parents, at least, is a professed believer,* Arminians baptize the children of all who apply for it, whether the parents are pious or not. Surely then, they should pluck the real beams out of their own eyes, before they give themselves so much concern about a supposed mote in another's eye.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANTI-CALVINISTIC MISREPRESENTATIONS.

Dr. Fisk, in the sermon with which he introduces the Calvinistic Controversy, says, "They (Calvinists) hold that God by his decree plunged Adam and all his race into the pit of sin, from which none of them had the means of escape," &c. In reference to this, Calvin says, "The primitive condition of man was ennobled with these eminent faculties. He possessed reason, understanding, prudence and judgment, not only for the government of his life on earth, but to enable him to ascend to God, and eternal felicity. In this integrity, man was endowed with free will, by which, if he had chosen, he might have obtained eternal life. For here, it would be unreasonable to introduce the question respecting the secret predesti-

* Abraham "received circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised," Rom. iv. 11; and on that faith his household were circumcised, Gen. xvii. 26, 27; Acts xvi. 14, 15, 30—33; 1 Cor. vii. 14; Heb. xi. 6; Psalm l. 16.

nation of God, because we are not discussing what might possibly have happened or not, but what was the real nature of man. Adam, therefore, could have stood, if he would, since he fell merely by his own will. Because his will was flexible to either side, and he was not endued with constancy to persevere, therefore he so easily fell. Yet his choice of good and evil, was free," &c.*

"Man in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will, and to do that which is good and well-pleasing; but yet mutably, so that they might fall from it."†

"Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, through the temptation of Satan, transgressed the commandment of God, in eating the forbidden fruit, and thereby fell from the estate of innocency wherein they were created."‡

Here then is one misrepresentation; let us notice another. In the introduction to "Foster's Objections to Calvinism," page 10, we meet with the following, viz. "We doubt not that many, after perusing these pages, will fully acquiesce with Calvin, in terming as he did, the decree of predestination, a 'horrible decree.'" A similar statement may be found in Watson's Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvii; in the Doctrinal Tracts, page 197, and in Arminian authors generally.

As this is a misrepresentation of Calvin, so common, we will take a somewhat careful notice of it. And, 1. The English word *horrible*, commonly suggests the idea of moral evil, but the Latin word *horribilis*, has no such meaning associated with it. Ainsworth renders it—1. Rough, rugged. 2. Horrible, terrible, dreadful, frightful. 3. Weighty, severe.

* Institutes, Book I. Chap. xv. Sec. viii.
† Confession of Faith, Chap. ix. Sec. ii.
‡ Larger Catechism, Question 21.

4. Awful, reverend. From this classification, it is evident that *horrible* does not mean anything improper. 2. The connection shows that Calvin did not attach to the word *horribilis*, the meaning his enemies represent; hence the only translation of his Institutes that has come under our notice, renders the original Latin word "awful" instead of "horrible," just as the sense requires. Calvin, in view of the awful consequences involved in the fall of our first parents, says of the divine decree in reference to it, "*Horribile decretum confiteor.*" It is an awful decree, I confess; just as we would say of the decree to bring on the deluge—of the decree for the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; or of the decree in reference to the eternal punishment of the wicked, &c. 3. On the very next page, in the same chapter, he says, "Predestination is no other than a dispensation of divine justice, mysterious indeed, but liable to no blame. Since they (the wicked) were not unworthy of being predestinated to that fate, it is equally certain that the destruction they incur, is consistent with the strictest justice." And on the next page he says, "The ordination of God, by which (the wicked) complain that they were destined to destruction, is guided by equity, unknown indeed to us, but indubitably certain. Whence we conclude that they sustain no misery which is not inflicted on them by the most righteous judgment of God."*

The following is taken from the *Christian Intelligencer* of March, 1854.

"*The Horrible Decree.*—In the current number of the *Methodist Quarterly*, a writer alludes twice to predestination as being called by Calvin himself a 'horrible decree.' The second time he goes so far as to give the original Latin, *decretum horribile.* This

* Institutes, Vol. II. Book III. Chap. xxxiii. Sec. 8, 9.

charge has been made frequently before in the same Review. It is wonderful that this stale and ridiculous story has not been long since exploded. Every reasonable person gives Calvin credit for at least ordinary piety and sense. How then could he have admitted that a doctrine which he believed and taught to be in the Scripture was horrible? Does it not involve a contradiction? Can a man really believe the Deity to do that which is horrible? It seems to us that he must either renounce his belief in such a Being as divine, or his conviction of the true character of his acts. The two cannot co-exist."

These remarks might be extended, but enough has been said to satisfy any one in search for truth, of the great injustice done to Calvin, and continued.

In the Calvinistic Controversy, we have the following, in the sermon:

"It is said that God out of his mere sovereignty, without anything in the creature to move him thereto, elects sinners to everlasting life."

"It is said!" But where is it so said? Calvinists do not know, and Arminians do not tell us. In the Confession of Faith, Chap. III. Sec. v., it is said, "Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God . . . hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto."

So then, while Arminians charge Calvinists with teaching "that God out of his mere sovereignty . elects sinners to everlasting life," Calvinists themselves teach that it is "out of his mere free grace and love." Arminians teach that "faith in Christ, producing obedience, is a cause, without which God elects

none unto glory."* Calvinists contend, on the contrary, that if this be true, then, of all who die in infancy, not one enters heaven; that if those who die in infancy are saved, then at least two-thirds of all that are saved are elected unto glory without "faith in Christ producing obedience." So that Arminians are compelled to yield this point, or give up the doctrine of infant salvation.

But, says the Arminian, "if there is nothing in the creature to move him (God) thereto, how can it be called mercy or compassion?"†

To this, Calvinists reply, they do not say "there is nothing in the creature to move him thereto," but that election is not based upon "a foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes, moving him thereunto;" and for the truth of their doctrine, they appeal to the word of God. Thus, Rom. xi. 5, "Even so then at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." Eph. ii. 8, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. i. 9.

Notwithstanding the Scriptures are thus full and

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 140.
† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

explicit, the Arminian goes, if possible, beyond it. Thus Mr. Wesley, in his sermon on "Salvation by Faith," says: "Of yourself cometh neither your faith nor your salvation. It is the gift of God; the free undeserved gift, the faith through which ye are saved, as well as the salvation which he of his own good pleasure, his mere favour annexes thereto. That ye believe, is one instance of his grace; that believing ye are saved, another. Not of works, lest any man should boast, for all our works, all our righteousness, which were before our believing, merited nothing of God, but condemnation. So far were they from deserving faith; which therefore whenever given is not of works. Neither is salvation of the works we do when we believe. For it is then God that worketh in us. And therefore, that he giveth us a reward for what he himself worketh, only commendeth the riches of his mercy, but leaveth us nothing whereof to glory."

If then "faith in Christ producing obedience, is a cause without which God elects none unto glory;" and if "of ourselves cometh neither our faith nor our salvation," "faith being the gift of God," and "he giveth us a reward for what he himself worketh," unless "he worketh" this faith in all, he must have selected those in whom he works it. But this is the personal unconditional election of the Calvinists. So then we have the Calvinistic views of that doctrine, sustained by Arminians, by fact, and by the word of God. Surely then it must be true.

Having disposed of two misrepresentations, we proceed to a third.

"All choice," says the Rev. R. Watson, "necessarily supposes some reason; but as men, all things were equal between those, who according to this scheme were chosen, and those who were passed by; but according to the Calvinists this election was made

arbitrarily, that is, without any reason, but that God would have it so."*

"If misery had been the exciting cause," says Dr. Fisk, "then as all were equally miserable, he would have elected them all."†

If then, "faith in Christ producing obedience, is a cause without which God elects none unto glory," as "all choice necessarily supposes some reason," and "as all are equally miserable," it follows, that unless all were elected, the election was made arbitrarily, that is, without any reason but that God would have it so.

But were not Jacob and Esau equal, when "being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger?"

If the position of Arminians be true, how did it happen that redemption was provided for fallen man but not for fallen angels? How did it happen that God passed by all other nations, and made the Jews only the repositories of his word? Why was not Elias sent to any but the widow of Sarepta, a city of Sidon, during the famine? Why were none of the lepers cleansed but Naaman the Syrian? No doubt, if an Arminian had been there, he would have reasoned thus, "If misery is the exciting cause" to the divine compassion, "then, as all" these widows and lepers are alike miserable, they should all be elected to the divine favour. Again, if this position be correct, why were Paul and Silas forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, yet sent for that object into Macedonia? And why did our Heavenly Father pass by millions of infants, yet sanctify John the Baptist and Jeremiah from the

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.
† Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.

womb? But although God himself says, in reference to such proceedings, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion;" "so that it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," Rom. ix. 14, &c.; and although the Saviour says in reference to such proceedings, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight;" the Arminian "is very bold and says," "all choice necessarily supposes some reason, but as all things were equal between those who were chosen, and those who were passed by, this election was made arbitrarily, that is, without any reason but that God would have it so." It is not wonderful therefore that John Knox should say of such writers, "The fountain of this their heresy is, that they acknowledge no justice in anything, except what their foolish brain is able to comprehend."*

It is delightful therefore to find these divines sobering down, and teaching a better theology. The Rev. R. Watson says, "It is the nature of an infinite being to be incomprehensible by finite beings. He must be mysterious. The train of his glory must enwrap itself in cloud. And after all these bursts of splendour, it is still true that 'the Lord hath said that he would dwell in thick darkness.' If we could fully know God, we must either be equal to him, or he must lose the glory of his nature and come down to us." "O then, my God, let me remember this, when dark and inexplicable dispensations surround me! I cannot fathom thy counsels, but I know that in them there is the highest reason. Let me remember this, when I look abroad on thy public dispensations to the world. If I cannot trace thy footsteps as to myself, how much more intricate must be thy plans, as to millions of immortal men. But what is dark to me

* McCrie's Life of Knox, page 138.

is light to thee. It is the imperfection of the creature which creates (darkness) as the mists arising from the earth, and gathering into clouds may obscure the brightness of the sun, while his own region is undimmed by a vapour. . . Let me remember this when bold men would tempt me to speculate by the aids of my own weak reason on thy perfections. I shrink from the attempt. I content myself with thy own word—with the measure of light it hath pleased thee to give. I dare not break through to gaze where 'dark with excessive bright, thy skirts appear.'"*

A fifth misrepresentation is, that the divine decrees, as maintained by Calvinists, are "arbitrary;" that is, without any reason.

"The Calvinistic view of God's sovereignty," says Watson, appears to be his doing what he wills, only because he wills it."†

"We call this sovereignty, not indeed in the sense of many Calvinistic writers, who appear to understand by the sovereign acts of God, those procedures which he adopts only to show that he has power to execute them," &c.‡

Again, speaking of "the collective election, and rejection taught in" the ninth chapter of Romans, he says, "They are not acts of arbitrary will, or of caprice; they are acts of wisdom and knowledge, the mysterious bearings of which are to be in future times developed. 'O the depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!' These are the devout expressions with which St. Paul concludes his discourse; but they would ill apply to the sovereign, arbitrary and unconditional reprobation of men from God's mercies, in time and in eternity, on the principle of taking some and leaving others without

* Sermon on the "Vision of Isaiah."
† Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.
‡ Ibid. Part II. Chap. xxvi.

any reason in themselves. There is no plan in this; no wisdom; no mystery; and it is capable of no further development for the instruction and benefit of the world. For that which rests originally on no reason, but solely on arbitrary will, is incapable, from its very nature, of becoming the component part of a deeply laid, and for a time, mysterious plan, which is to be brightened into manifest wisdom, and to terminate in the good of mankind, and the glory of God."*

These are specimens of what may be found in the Theological Institutes. But notwithstanding we are here told of the "arbitrary election of the Calvinists," of "sovereign, arbitrary reprobation, on the principle of taking some, and leaving others, solely on arbitrary will;" of "*many* Calvinistic writers who appear to understand by the sovereign acts of God, those proceedings which he adopts only to show that he has power to execute them," &c.; the writer takes it upon himself to say, that these are samples of the slanders that abound in Arminian writings, and that not a Calvinistic writer can be adduced who teaches any of the things here charged. The Confession of Faith, after saying, "there is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection," says of him, among other things, that he is "most wise, most holy, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will; hating all sin;" that "by the most wise, and holy counsel of his own will, he did freely and unchangably ordain whatsoever comes to pass," &c.; that he "doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness

* Theological Institutes, part II. Chap. xxvi.

and mercy;" that "the Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extendeth itself to the first fall, not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation to his holy ends."* Calvinists do not believe, therefore, that there is, or can be, any "arbitrary decree" or act, by such a being. In such a God, they can repose under all circumstances. And though "clouds and darkness are round about him," and they meet with many things in his word, and in his providence, they do not understand, yet with the holy Apostle they exclaim, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Rom. xi. 33.

But we say further, that neither are any of the errors here charged, taught by John Calvin. As against him, there is a special charge, and as it embraces the others last named, we will give that charge a special consideration.

Mr. Watson, after his statement of "the scheme, as exhibited by Calvin," says, "To the objection taken from justice, Calvin replies," 'They (the objectors) inquire, by what right the Lord is angry with his creatures who had not provoked him by any previous offence; for to devote to destruction whom he pleases, is more like the caprice of a tyrant than the lawful sentence of a judge. If such thoughts ever enter into the minds of pious men, they will be sufficiently enabled to break their violence by this one consideration—how exceedingly presumptuous it is, to inquire into the causes of the divine will, which is in fact, and is justly entitled to be, the cause of every thing that exists! For if it has any cause, then there must be

* Confession of Faith, Chap. II.—V.

something antecedent on which it depends, which it is impious to suppose. For the will of God is the highest rule of justice; so that what he wills must be considered just, for this very reason, because he wills it.'

"The evasions," says Watson, "are here curious. 1. He assumes the very thing in dispute, viz. that God has willed the destruction of any part of the human race, for no other cause than because he wills it; of which assumption, there is not only not a word in Scripture; but on the contrary, all Scripture describes the death of him that dieth to his own will, and not to the will of God, and therefore contradicts his statement. 2. He pretends that to assign any cause to the divine will, is to suppose something antecedent to, something above God, and therefore 'impious;' as if we might not suppose something in God to be the rule of his will, not only without impiety, but with truth and piety; as for instance, his perfect wisdom, holiness, justice and goodness: or, in other words, to believe the exercise of his will to flow from the perfection of his whole nature; a much more honourable and scriptural view than that which subjects it to no rule, even in the nature of God himself. 3. When he calls the will of God, 'the highest rule of justice, beyond which we cannot push our inquiries,' he confounds the will of God as a rule of justice to us, and as a rule to himself. This will is our rule, yet even then, because we know it is the will of a perfect being; but when Calvin represents mere will, as constituting God's own rule of justice, he shuts out knowledge, discrimination of the nature of things and holiness; which is saying something very different to that great truth, that God cannot will anything but what is perfectly just. It is to say, that blind will, which has no respect to anything but itself, is God's highest rule of justice; a position, which if presented abstractedly, many of the most ultra Calvinists would

spurn. 4. He determines the question by the authority of his own metaphysics, and totally forgets that one dictum of inspiration overturns his whole theory: God 'willeth all men to be saved;' a declaration which in no part of the sacred volume is limited by any contrary declaration."*

We could easily show that these objections are suicidal, but as we shall show that the teaching of Calvin is perverted, it is unnecessary.

Calvin says, "It is exceedingly presumptuous to inquire into the causes of the divine will," "because the will of God is the highest rule of justice, so that what he wills must be considered just, for this very reason, because he wills it," meaning that, an infinitely wise, and just, and holy God, "wills it." That such is his meaning, is evident from the fact that, thirteen lines below, what Mr. Watson quotes, he indignantly repels what Mr. Watson charges. "We espouse not," says he, "the notion of the Romish theologians concerning the absolute and arbitrary power of God, (that is, power exercised by arbitrary will,) which on account of its profaneness, deserves our detestation. We represent not God as lawless, who is a law to himself; because as Plato says, laws are necessary to men, who are the subjects of evil desires; but the will of God is not only pure from every fault, but the highest standard of perfection, even the law of all laws. But we deny that we are proper judges, to decide on this cause according to our own apprehensions. Wherefore, if we attempt to go beyond what is lawful, let us be deterred by the Psalmist, who tells us that God will be clear when he is judged by mortal man."† "Let us, I say, permit the Christian man to open his heart and his ears to all the discourses addressed to him by God, only with

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.
† Institutes, Book III. Chap. xxiii.

this moderation, that as soon as the Lord closes his sacred mouth, he shall also desist from further inquiry. This will be the best barrier of sobriety, if in learning, we not only follow the leadings of God, but as soon as he ceases to teach, we give up our design of learning."*

From this it appears, that what Mr. Watson charges on Calvin, Calvin calls profane, and says it deserves detestation.

It may not be amiss to remark, that the very objections urged by Mr. Watson, were urged against Calvin's teachings in Calvin's day. Let us see how he replied to his calumniator.

"The first article you take hold of is, that God, by a simple and pure act of his will, created the greatest part of the world for destruction. Now all that about the greatest part of the world, and the simple pure act of the will of God, is fictitious, and the product of the workshop of your malice. . . . . This way of talking is nowhere to be met with in my writings, viz. that the end of creation is eternal destruction. . . Besides, though the will of God is to me the highest of all reasons, yet I everywhere teach, that where the reason of his counsels and his works does not appear, the reason is hid with him; so that he always decreed justly and wisely. Therefore, I not only reject, I detest the trifling of the schoolmen, about absolute power, because they separate his justice from his authority. I subjecting, as I do, the human race to the will of God, loudly declare that he decreed nothing without the best reason, which if unknown to us now, shall be cleared up at last. You, thrusting forward, a 'simple and pure act of the will,' impudently upbraid me with that which I openly reject, in a hundred places or more."†

We have now heard from Calvin, let us hear from the sacred writers also.

* Institutes, Chap. xxi. † Secret Providence, pp. 17, 18.

"Of his own will he begat us by the word of truth." James i. 18. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. i. 5, 11.

Why, this is fully up to Calvin. Not a reason is assigned for what is done but "his will," "the good pleasure of his will," "according to the counsel of his own will," "as if we might not suppose something in God to be the rule of his will; as for instance, his perfect wisdom, justice and goodness, or in other words, to believe the exercise of his will to flow from the perfection of his whole nature; a much more honourable and scriptural view, than that which subjects it to no rule, even in the nature of God himself." "When (the Apostles) represent mere will, as constituting God's rule of justice, they shut out knowledge, discrimination of the nature of things, and holiness, which is saying something very different from that great truth, that God cannot will anything but what is perfectly just. It is to say that blind will which has respect to anything but itself, is God's highest rule of justice; a position which, if presented abstractedly, many of the most ultra" (Apostles) "would spurn."*

The "judgments of God are a mighty deep," "his wisdom is unsearchable and his ways past finding out." "He giveth to none account of his affairs," and "it is his glory to conceal a thing." As then, "the secret things belong unto the Lord our God, while that which is revealed belongeth unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law," Calvin did not "desire to be wise above what was written." He therefore taught that the

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxviii.

will of an infinitely wise, and just, and holy "God, is the highest rule of justice; so that what he wills must be considered just, because he wills it;" that such a "God is a law unto himself, his will being not only free from every fault, bnt the highest standard of perfection, even the law of laws," and therefore that "it is exceedingly presumptuous in men to inquire after the reasons for what he wills, further than he has been pleased to reveal them." But Calvinism is very much objected to; it may not be amiss therefore, to hear what Arminians say on the same subject.

"In creatures," says Watson, "holiness is conformity to the will of God as expressed in his laws, and consists in abstinence from every thing which has been comprehended under the general term *sin*, and in the habit and practice of righteousness. . . . Our conception of holiness in creatures, both in its negative, and in its positive import, is therefore explicit. It is determined by the will of God. But when we speak of God, we speak of a being who is a law unto himself, and whose conduct cannot be referred to a higher authority than his own."*

"Of a being who is a law unto himself, and whose conduct cannot be referred to a higher authority than his own!"—Of course then, it would be the height of presumption in the subjects of such a being, to inquire after, or judge of his reasons for what he wills, further than he has been pleased to reveal them. Here then, is the real (though not the shamefully misrepresented) teaching of Calvin, by Mr. Watson himself.

Again. "In many respects, so far as we are concerned, we see no other reasons for his proceedings, than that he so wills to act."†

"No other reason for his proceedings, than that he so wills to act!"—Why, Mr. Watson! what do you

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. vii.
† Ibid. Part II. Chap. xxviii.

mean? Is it possible, after all your fuss about "blind arbitrary will," "the arbitrary decrees of his will," &c., and the fuss of your brethren who endorse your sentiments, that you yourself go further than the furthest, in charging the Almighty with "the arbitrary decrees of his will."

How then, it may be asked, does Mr. Watson extricate himself? Why, by turning a Calvinist. But hear him, in continuation of what we have just quoted: "But it is an error to conclude from want of information in such cases, that God acts, merely because he so wills to act, that because he gives not those reasons for his conduct which we have no right to demand, that he acts without any reasons at all; and because we are not admitted to the secrets of his council chamber, that his government is perfectly arbitrary, and that the mainspring of his dispensations is to make a show of his power; a conclusion which implies a most unworthy notion of God, which he has himself contradicted in the most explicit manner. Even his most mysterious proceedings are called 'judgments,' and he is said to 'work all things according to the counsel of his own will,' a collation of words which sufficiently shows that not blind will, but will subject to 'counsel,' is that 'sovereign will that governs the world.'"

Having noticed some of the glaring misrepresentations by Messrs. Fisk and Watson, and which have been endorsed by the General Conference, before we proceed to others, by other writers of the same school, we wish to call the attention of the reader to the professions of fairness and candour of the said writers.

Dr. Fisk says, in his preliminary remarks, "It is hoped, at least, that the subject may be investigated in the spirit of Christianity, and that there will be no loss of brotherly love and Christian candour, if there be no gain on the side of truth."*

† Calvinistic Controversy, pp. 7, 8.

Mr. Watson, speaking of the "extent of the atonement," says, "This inquiry leads us into what is called the Calvinistic controversy; a controversy which has always been conducted with great ardour, and sometimes with intemperance. I shall endeavour to consider such parts of it, as are comprehended in the question before us, with perfect calmness and fairness, &c., recollecting on the one hand, how many excellent and learned men have been arranged on each side. . . . By many ministers who have attacked this system, the truth which it contains, as well as the error, has often been invaded, and the assault itself has been not unfrequently conducted on principles exceedingly anti-scriptural and fatally delusive."*

Again: after having carried his inquiry through three successive chapters, he says, "In this discourse it is hoped that no expression has hitherto escaped inconsistent with candour. Doctrinal truth would be as little served by this as Christian charity."†

The reader can judge how far these writers have acted in accordance with their professions.

Perhaps the following, from the Encyclopœdia of Religious Knowledge, article "Richard Watson," may throw some light on Mr. Watson's course.

"We can discover, we think, the embryo polemic, in the youth of fifteen; for he owed at this, the period of his conversion, his hatred to Calvinism. The worthy helpmate of a watchmaker, his particular friend and assistant in mathematical studies, was of this obnoxious school, 'talkative and violent.' To provide himself with arguments against her attacks, young Watson first sought the Methodists, and 'the word,' says Mr. Jackson, 'came with power to his heart.' He was now no longer solicitous for controversy, but for a better acquaintance with himself; and

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxv.
† Ibid. Part II. Chap. xxviii.

not many days elapsed, after he was convinced of sin, before he was made a happy partaker of pardoning grace.

"We can neither doubt that he largely partook of this grace, nor that he was in after years one of the ripest and ablest advocates of it in England. But who, on the other hand, can dispute the powerful influence of the female polemic's unhappy temper on the thwarted young mathematician? Mr. Watson, in particular passages of his printed works, discovers an antipathy to the name and forms of Calvinistic argument, which has, we confess, often surprised us. It is singularly unlike the ordinary march of his majestic mind, and the style of his latter preaching, as reported to us. Will not a Christian philosophy detect in many a personal anecdote of this kind, a very obvious source of prejudices, not otherwise to be accounted for?"

But again, Mr. Wesley, in his sermon on "The Trinity," says, "Persons may be quite right in their opinions, and yet have no religion at all. And on the other hand, persons may be truly religious who hold many erroneous opinions. Can any one possibly doubt of this while there are any Romanists in the world? For who can deny, not only that many of them formerly have been truly religious, but that many of them even at this day, are real inward Christians? And yet what a heap of erroneous opinions do they hold, delivered by tradition from their fathers! Nay, who can doubt of it while there are Calvinists in the world—asserters of absolute predestination? For who will dare to affirm that none of these are truly religious men? Not only many of them in the last century were burning and shining lights, but many of them are now real Christians, loving God and all mankind. And yet what are all the absurd opinions of all the Romanists in the world compared to that one, that the God of love, the wise, the just, merciful

Father of the spirits of all flesh, has from all eternity, fixed an absolute, unchangeable, irresistible decree, that part of mankind shall be saved, do what they will, and the rest damned, do what they can?"

"A skeptical author," says Bishop Morris, "is a sinner that destroys much good." Verbal sayings are soon forgotten, but printed sophistry fills with poison the veins of future generations. With poison? Yes, what better than moral poison are the sophisms of infidels, such as Volney, Hume, and Paine; or the dogmas of Arianism and Socinianism, such as are commonly found in the productions of Unitarians, Universalists, Hicksites, and Shakers; or in the idolatrous ceremonies of Popery; as bowing to images, praying to saints, and the worship of the host in the mass? And we ask, what better than moral poison, are a few distinctive features in Calvinism, such as (that) "God from all eternity, did freely and unchangeably foreordain whatsoever comes to pass?* Of a piece with this, are the immutable decrees of unconditional election, and reprobation. What mischief have these various doctrines done to the souls of men! by the printing or circulating of which, a man destroys much good that might otherwise be effected."†

The doctrines here charged, however, have been shown to be, not of the Presbyterian but of the Methodist Church. These Popish, Socinian, and Infidel companions, of course belong to Arminians, but not to Calvinists. The bishop and the archbishop have saddled the wrong horse, merely.

Again, in Mr. Wesley's Works, Vol. V., page 238, we have the following in reference to Calvinism, viz. "It seems to magnify Christ, although in reality it supposes him to have died in vain. For the absolutely

* Here Bishop Morris garbles, and thus perverts the Confession of Faith.

† Sermon on the Achievements of Sinners.

elect, must have been saved without him, and the non-elect cannot be saved by him."

To prove this to be slander, would seem to be a work of supererogation; still it may not be altogether amiss, as we intend to do our work thoroughly.

The answer to the sixtieth question of the Larger Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, says (among other things,) "Neither is their salvation in any other, but in Christ alone." To sustain this answer, reference is made to Acts iv. 12, which is as follows, viz. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."*

Two very brief passages from Calvin, out of very many that might be given, will show conclusively what were his views on this subject.

"Christ," says he, "speaks not of his own time only, but comprehends all ages, when he says, 'This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' John xvii. 3. Therefore God never showed himself propitious to his ancient people, nor afforded them any hope of his favour without a mediator."†

These quotations, which might be increased to almost any number, suffice to show that Mr. Wesley could not have made a statement more directly at war with the truth. But we must proceed.

In the Doctrinal Tracts, page 26, the Calvinist is charged as follows, viz. "In making this supposition of what God might have done, (viz. "have passed him by,") "you," (the Calvinist,) "suppose his justice might have been separated from his other attributes, from his mercy in particular."

By no means. The Calvinist does not think so. He thinks such a proposition blasphemous, but we

* Confession of Faith, page 175.
† Institutes, Book II. Chap. vi.

find that doctrine taught in the Methodist Doctrinal Tracts, and that too in the same Tract in which it is charged against Calvinists. Thus they say, page 57, "The sovereignty of God appears, 1. In fixing from eternity that decree touching the sons of men—'He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not, shall be damned.' 2. In all the general circumstances of creation; in the time, the place, manner of creating all things; in appointing the number and kinds of creatures, visible and invisible. 3. In allotting the natural endowments, these to one, and those to another. 4. In disposing the time, place, and other outward circumstances (as parents, relations) attending the birth of every one. 5. In dispensing the various gifts of his Spirit for the edification of his Church. 6. In ordering all temporal things, as health, fortune, friends, every thing short of eternity. But in disposing the eternal states of men (allowing only what was observed under the first article,) it is clear, that not sovereignty alone, but justice, mercy and truth hold the reins."

Here then, it is stated that the sovereignty of God appears in ordering all temporal things; "but in disposing the eternal states of men, not sovereignty alone, but justice, mercy and truth hold the reins." It is therefore a doctrine of the Methodist Church, that God is sovereign only in reference to the affairs of time, but both sovereign and just in reference to the things of eternity. Or in other words, unjust in time, but just in eternity. The reader must not suppose that Arminians hold to no other doctrine on this subject. If they did, however erroneous, they would be consistent. In the same Tract they say, on pages 26 and 31, "All his" (God's) "attributes are inseparably joined; they cannot be divided for a moment." "Take care, when you speak of these high things, to speak as the oracles of God; and if so, you will never

speak of the sovereignty of God, but in conjunction with his other attributes."

The writer is here reminded of a man he once knew, who, being a notorious offender in little things, built his house directly over the county line; consequently, when a civil officer came from one county to arrest him, he (the offender,) would go into that part of his house which was in the other county, and politely invite the officer in. The reader can make the application.

Some years ago a sect sprung up in the West, which after a time, met in convention to make out a creed. After an effort of several days they unanimously agreed on the following, viz. "Our belief consists in that wherein we differ from other denominations." Notwithstanding the editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* says, in a late editorial,* "A thorough revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, embodying Wesleyan doctrines, and expurgating the Manichean elements, would be a noble work, and then the Confession of Faith would be the masterpiece of the world;" he who undertakes "an embodiment of Wesleyan doctrines," will find it a Herculean task, and the embodiment to consist of as heterogeneous materials as could be thrown together.

Again, in the Doctrinal Tracts, page 127, we have the following, viz.

"Some roundly assert, there are no calls ofgrace, no offers at all, in the word of God, to any but the elect."

'Some roundly assert"—but these are not named, nor (as the writer believes) were they ever heard of.

Again: "As this doctrine manifestly and directly tends to overthrow the whole Christian Revelation, so it does the same thing by plain consequence, in making that revelation contradict itself. For it is

* See a number of that paper for November, 1853.

grounded on such an interpretation of some texts, (more or fewer, it matters not) as flatly contradicts all the other texts, and, indeed, the whole scope and tenor of Scripture. For instance: the asserters of this doctrine, interpret that text of Scripture, 'Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,' as implying that God in a literal sense hated Esau, and all the reprobate from eternity."

Here again, is mere assertion without reference to any authority to sustain it. The writer has examined the Calvinistic commentaries he has access to, and not one of them interprets the passage as is charged, but contrary. So far as he is aware, the following is substantially the interpretation of all Calvinists, viz. In Gen. xxix. 33, Leah says she was hated of her husband; while in the 30th verse, Moses says, "Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah." In Luke xiv. 26, our Saviour says, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." While he says again, in Mat. x. 37, John xii. 25, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." "He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." As, therefore, when Jacob is said to have loved Rachel and hated Leah, all that is meant is, that he loved Leah less than he loved Rachel; and when it is said, "except a man hate his father and his mother, &c., he cannot be a disciple of Christ," all that is meant is, that he must love them less than he loves Christ; so also when God is said to have loved Jacob and hated Esau, all that is meant is, that he loved Esau less than he loved Jacob.

Again, in the Doctrinal Tracts, page 157, the following question is proposed to Calvinists, viz.

"Do you not believe God hardens the hearts of them that perish? Do you not believe he (literally) hardened Pharaoh's heart, and that for this end he raised him up, (or created him?")

To this we reply, first, that the words "literally" and "or created him," are not used by either Moses or Paul. In the case referred to, they are to be set down as Arminian interpolations. Divested of these, Calvinists receive the passage.

As to "literally hardening," &c., the writer knows of nothing that looks more that way, than the following from Dr. Fisk, viz. "God blinds men and hardens their hearts judicially, as a just punishment for their abuse of their agency."*

But again: "The Calvinists believe," says Wesley, "that the saving grace of God is absolutely irresistible, that no man is any more able to resist it than a stroke of lightning."†

"You say, the reprobates cannot but do evil; and that the elect, from the day of God's power, cannot but continue in well doing. You suppose all this is unchangeably decreed, in consequence whereof God acts irresistibly on one, and Satan on the other," "so that your supposition of God's ordaining from eternity whatsoever should be done to the end of the world, as well as that of God's acting irresistibly in the elect, and Satan's acting irresistibly in the reprobates, utterly overthrows the Scripture doctrine of rewards and punishments, as well as of a judgment to come."‡

Again, on page 49, the Calvinist is represented as saying, "It is not so much for the glory of God to save a man as a free agent, put into a capacity of either concurring with, or resisting his grace, as to

* Calvinistic Controversy, the Sermon.
† Works, Vol. VI. page 134.
‡ Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 37, 38.

save him in the way of a necessary agent, by a power which he cannot possibly resist."

The sum of all is, that according to Calvinists, the elect are irresistibly compelled to be holy, and the reprobate irresistibly compelled to sin; or that "God acts irresistibly on one, and Satan on the other."

To this we reply—these divines teach themselves, as has been already shown, that God cannot control free agents without destroying their free agency, while the devil can—that there are some only whom he can "conform to the image of his Son," and yet that "there are exempt cases wherein the overwhelming power of divine grace does, for a time, work as irresistibly as lightning from heaven;" and that, in some souls, "the grace of God is so far irresistible that they cannot but believe and be finally saved." And yet these men charge Calvinists with teaching that "God acts irresistibly on the elect, and Satan irresistibly on the reprobate."

Finally: "This doctrine (viz. personal unconditional election) is highly injurious to Christ our mediator, and to the efficacy and excellency of his gospel. For it supposes his mediation to be necessarily of none effect with regard to the salvation of the greater part of the world."*

"They" (Calvinists) "affirm that the far lesser number have received saving grace."†

"The same Lord over all is rich in mercy to all that call upon him." Rom. x. 12. "But you" (the Calvinist) "say, No, he is such only to those for whom Christ died, and those are not all, but only a few."‡

In the Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 139, 140, Arminians tell us that "God, from the foundation of the world, foreknew all men believing or not believing, and

* Doctrinal Tracts, p 100. † Ibid. p. 124. ‡ Ibid. p. 167.

according to this, his foreknowledge, he chose or elected all obedient believers as such, to salvation, and refused or reprobated all disobedient believers, as such to damnation." As then believers in any age have been, when compared with the unbelievers, very few, and are likely to be so, until the near approach of, and during the millennium, if we confine salvation to them, Arminians do not teach that any more will be saved than Calvinists do.

But again, according to the Doctrinal Tracts, "Faith and obedience is a cause without which God elects none unto glory." This then, shuts out all who die in infancy and early childhood. It is true the Doctrinal Tracts, and discipline of the Methodist Church, make baptized infants who die, an exception, but the number of them is comparatively very small. While then the Calvinist believes that all who die in faith, and in infancy and early childhood are saved, which makes up more than two-thirds of those who die in an age, it is the Arminian who teaches that "the efficacy of the gospel, and mediation of Christ is necessarily of none effect to the greater part of the world," that "the far lesser number have received saving grace," and that God "is rich in mercy to a few only" of the human family.

We have now presented the reader with samples of the misrepresentations of Calvinism, with which Arminian writings abound. We think he will conclude with us, that Mr. Watson was correct when he said, "By many writers who have attacked this system, the truth it contains has been invaded, and the assault itself has been not unfrequently conducted on principles exceedingly anti-scriptural, and fatally delusive."

CHAPTER XIV.

GARBLED QUOTATIONS.

THE late Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., speaking of Calvinism, has correctly remarked, that "no theological system was ever more grossly misrepresented, or more foully vilified"—that "it would be difficult to find a writer or speaker, who has distinguished himself by opposing it, who has fairly represented the system, or who really appeared to understand it; that "they are for ever fighting against a caricature."* Let us try to find the starting point. First, then, we will call the reader's attention to their garbling of the Confession of Faith.

Chap. iii. Sec. 1, of that document, is as follows, viz. "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own free will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass, yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."

This, the General Conference have garbled as follows, viz. "God from all eternity did unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass."†

So then, while the Confession of Faith teaches that God's ordination is, "by the most wise and holy counsel of his own free will," after this Arminian garbling, it is ordination merely, without wisdom, holiness, or counsel. "There is in it, no plan, no wisdom, no mystery, and it is capable of no further

* Miller on Presbyterianism and Baptism, pp. 26, 27.
† Doctrinal Tracts, p. 8.

development for the instruction and benefit of the world."*

It may be proper to remark, that this quotation thus garbled, may be found several times in the works of Wesley, twice in the Doctrinal Tracts, page 194, and four times in the Calvinistic Controversy, viz. pages 9, 22, 47, 60, &c. &c.

It is true, that the first time it appears in the latter, and the second time it appears in the former, reference is made to the "Assembly's Catechism, Chap. iii." But as the Catechism is not divided into chapters, nor is there any question about the divine decrees near question third, there can be no doubt that Chapter third of the Confession of Faith was intended.

Again, in Chap. v. Sec. 4, of the Confession of Faith, we have the following, viz.

"The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and to all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends, yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin."

So says the Confession of Faith: let us see next how this is quoted by Mr. Wesley and the General Conference.

In "A dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend," we have the following,† viz.

"*Friend.* Does sin necessarily come to pass?

"*Predestinarian.* Undoubtedly; for the almighty

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxvi.

† See the Doctrinal Tracts, page 195.

power of God extends itself to the first fall, and to all other sins of angels and men."*

Although then, the Confession of Faith teaches, that the power, wisdom and goodness of God, so far manifest themselves that his providence extends to all sin, and that although he permits it, he is not the author or approver of it; and further, that in permitting it, he hath joined with the permission, a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering, and governing it, in a dispensation to his own holy ends," &c.; these "sinless" garblers make it teach, that men and angels, have by Almighty power been forced to sin.

It is proper to remark, that although the Catechism is referred to here also, for the reasons already given, the Confession of Faith must have been intended.

Again: The Confession of Faith, Chap. iii. Sec. 5, is as follows, viz.

"Those of mankind, that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace."

Let us see next how Mr. Wesley and the General Conference have garbled this.

"Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, without any foresight of faith and good works."†

While then, the Confession of Faith teaches, that the people of God were chosen in Christ unto ever-

* Assembly's Catechism, Chap. v. † Doctrinal Tracts, page 8.

lasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without the foresight of anything in them as a condition, or cause, moving him thereto, these garblers make it teach, that the elect will be saved, do what they will: a doctrine which the Confession does not teach, and which those who adopt it abhor.

Once more: The Confession of Faith says, Chap. iii. Sec. 7, "The rest of mankind, God was pleased according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by and ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

We will see now what garbling and mutilating has been done to this also.

"The rest of mankind God was pleased for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and ordain them to dishonour and wrath."*

Thus leaving out "the unsearchable counsel of his own will" in the former part, and "for their sin," in the latter part of the section, and making the transaction a mere arbitrary act of sovereign power, directly contrary to the teaching of the document itself.

That God does pass the finally impenitent by, and ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, is not denied. As then he actually does it, Calvinists contend that it was not wrong for him to decree to do it at any time anterior to the event. But notwithstanding the General Conference tell us that "the eternal decree is expressed in these words, 'he that believeth not shall be damned;'† that God, from the foundation of the world foreknew all men's believing or not believing, and according to this his foreknowledge, refused or reprobated all disobedient unbelievers as such to damnation;‡ they so garble and mutilate

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 8. † Ibid. page 15.
‡ Ibid. page 139.

the Confession of Faith as to make it teach that the non-elect will be sent to hell, though as holy as angels.

We have now finished what we wished to say of the garbling and mutilating done to the Confession of Faith. The writer very seriously doubts whether the ingenuity of man could more entirely pervert the meaning of any document. This is doubtless the foundation of the objections and misrepresentations already adverted to.

We will, in the next place, give a few samples of the garbling and misrepresentations done to other Calvinistic authorities. And here we acknowledge our indebtedness to the Rev. William Annan, D. D. In his "Difficulties of Arminian Methodism," he has pointed out some fifteen or more examples fully equal to what have already been presented.

In the stereotype edition of the Methodist Doctrinal Tracts there is "A Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend," which is graced with the following line, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee." The truth of the motto we will find as we pass along. As the perversions of the Confession of Faith have been already noticed, in quoting them we will make no remarks.

"*Friend.* Sir, I have heard that you make God the author of all sin, and the destroyer of the greater part of mankind without mercy.

"*Predestinarian.* I deny it; I only say God did from all eternity unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.*

"*Friend.* Does sin necessarily come to pass?

"*Predestinarian.* Undoubtedly, for 'the almighty power of God extends itself to the first fall, and to all other sins of angels and men.'"†

The following sentiment is in the same Dialogue,

* Assembly's Catechism, Chap. iii. † Ibid. Chap. v.

ascribed to Dr. Twisse, the presiding officer of the Westminster Assembly, viz.

"All things come to pass by the efficacious and irresistible will of God."

But this was one of the charges of Arminius against Calvinism, and not the language or sentiment of Dr. Twisse at all. It is true he professes his willingness to adopt it with certain explanations, the design of which may be learned from his definition of the divine decree, viz. "The purpose of God to do or permit anything." Was there ever a greater perversion of the sentiments of any author?

Again: Zanchius is represented as teaching that, "God's first constitution was, that some should be destined to eternal ruin; and to this end their sins were ordained, and a denial of grace in order to their sins."*

But the works of Zanchius contain no such passage in the place referred to, nor (as is believed,) any where else. The accuracy of the extract, however, may be learned from the following, which are the express words of the author, viz. "God, as he daily permits the good as well as the wicked to fall into sin, so also from eternity he decreed to permit all men to sin."

We might thus go on and show how Calvinistic authors fare in these same hands. The reader who may have a desire to get a further insight into this matter, is referred to the Appendix to Dr. Annan's book. What we have given is a sample of the whole.

Having finished our notice of the garbling, mutilating and perverting of Calvinistic authorities, we will in the next place call the reader's attention to the profession of candour and fairness under which these things are done.

* Zanchius de Natura Dei, pp. 553, 554.

The Dialogue from which we have quoted, begins thus, "To all predestinarians."

"1. I am informed some of you have said, that the following quotations are false—that these words were not spoken by these authors;—others, that they were not spoken in this sense;—and others, that neither you yourself, nor any true predestinarian, ever did, or ever would speak so.

"2. My friends, the authors here quoted are well known, in whom you may read the words with your own eyes. And you who have read them, know in your conscience, that they were spoken in this sense, and no other; nay, that this sense of them, is professedly defended throughout the whole treatises whence they are taken." The reader must make his own comments. He will doubtless conclude, however, that Mr. Watson was correct, when he said, "By many writers who have attacked the system (of Calvinism,) the truth has often been invaded, and the assault not unfrequently conducted on principles exceedingly antiscriptural and fatally delusive."

Having shown how Calvinistic authorities are quoted by Arminian writers, it may not be amiss to show the effect of giving a part only of the testimony in any given case.

A, for example, tells his neighbours that he saw B go to the stable of C, and take therefrom a horse, mount him, and set out for Texas. Instantly the impression is made, that B has stolen a horse. Whereas, if A had told the whole truth, viz. that B, before taking the horse, paid to C a hundred and fifty dollars for him, no such impression would have been made. Notwithstanding then, what he told was true, inasmuch as it was not the whole truth, he told a lie.

We will now show that the same result will follow, when a written document is so quoted as to convey an opposite meaning from that intended.

The fourteenth Psalm begins thus, "The fool hath

said in his heart, There is no God." Drop the introductory clause and it will read thus—"There is no God." Take the whole together, and that is the saying of a fool.

Again, in 2 Samuel xvii. 23, it is said, "And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order and hanged himself;" and in Luke x. 37, it is said, "Go (thou) and do likewise." Here then, according to this way of quoting, every man has a command from the Bible to hang himself, but when the truth is all told, it is a command to go, like the good Samaritan, and help his neighbour in distress.

How Mr. Wesley and the General Conference fare in view of these things, the writer will not say. By garbling, mutilating and perverting, they make for Calvinists doctrines which the latter reject, and then assail them in the following language, viz. "They must believe, that in the ages of eternity, God determined to create men and angels for the express purpose of damning them eternally! That he determined to introduce sin, and influence men to commit it, and harden them in it, that they might be fit subjects of his wrath! That for doing as they were impelled to do, by the irresistible decree of Jehovah, they must lie down for ever, under the scalding phials of his vengeance in the pit of hell! To state this doctrine in its true character, is enough to chill one's blood—and we are drawn by all that is rational within us, to turn away from such a God with horror, as from the presence of an Almighty tyrant."*

"This is the blasphemy clearly contained in the horrible decree of predestination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every asserter of it. You represent God as worse than the devil, more

* Calvinistic Controversy—the Sermon.

false, more cruel, more unjust. 'But you say you will prove it by Scripture.' Hold! What will you prove by Scripture? That God is worse than the devil? It cannot be. Whatever that Scripture proves, it never can prove this. Whatever its true meaning be, this cannot be its true meaning.

"This is the blasphemy for which I abhor the doctrine of predestination: a doctrine, upon the supposition of which, if one could possibly suppose it for a moment, he might say to our adversary the devil, 'Thou fool, why dost thou roar about any longer? Thy lying in wait for souls is as needless and useless as our preaching. Hearest thou not, that God hath taken thy work out of thy hands; and that he doth it much more effectually? Thou, with all thy principalities and powers, canst only so assault that we may resist thee. But he can irresistibly destroy both body and soul in hell! Thou canst only entice; but his unchangeable decree to leave thousands of souls in death, compels them to continue in sin till they drop into everlasting burnings. Thou temptest; he forceth us to be damned, for we cannot resist his will. Thou fool, why goest thou about any longer, seeking whom thou mayest devour? Hearest thou not that God is the devouring lion, the destroyer of souls, the murderer of men? Moloch caused only children to pass through the fire, and that fire was soon quenched; the corruptible body being consumed, its torment was at an end. But God, thou art told, by his eternal decree, fixed before they had done good or evil, causes not only children of a span long, but the parents also, to pass through the fire of hell—the fire which never shall be quenched; and the body which is cast thereinto, being now incorruptible and immortal, will be ever consuming, and never consumed: but the smoke of their torment, because it is God's good pleasure, ascendeth up for ever and ever."*

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 171—173.

If the reader has any desire to see what we have just given exceeded, he has only to turn to the "Objections to Calvinism," pp. 54, 167, &c.

But notwithstanding all this misrepresentation, slander and abuse, the General Conference finding that Calvinists did not preach in accordance with the doctrines set down to their account, took another step, and published a Tract under the title of "Duplicity Exposed." In this, after some introductory remarks, they say, speaking of the "Congregational and Presbyterian Churches of this country," "It never comports with honesty, much less with religious integrity, to dissemble with the public, professing one thing while we industriously circulate another. However unwilling we are to charge such duplicity on *any body* of people, yet we are constrained to say, the pretensions and practices of some men, are to us unaccountable." "We say, they (the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches,) believe the doctrine of eternal and unchangeable decrees, of unconditional election and reprobation, of the universal agency of God, by which he worketh all things in all men, even wickedness in the wicked"—"because he chooses on the whole, that they should go on in sin, and thereby give him a plausible pretext for damning them in the flames of hell for ever." We do not mean to blame any person for believing the above stated doctrine, if they cannot conscientiously disbelieve it; but we do and must blame them, when they dissemble their belief, by sometimes saying they do not believe what we know they industriously teach."*

"If the associated Congregational and Presbyterian Churches have made any material alteration in their doctrine and discipline, we think they owe it to the public to show what articles they have rejected, &c. In short, they ought to publish a revised

* Objections to Calvinism, pp. 8, 9.

edition of their Confession of Faith." "The object of this Tract is not to controvert, or disprove the horrid sentiments it discloses, but simply to demonstrate that such sentiments are held and propagated, while many who affect to disavow them, are endeavouring to suit them to the popular taste by exhibiting them in a disguised dress. We blame not people who honestly believe, but we blame those who disbelieve what they openly profess and teach."*

It reminds us of a *spiritual* song that used to be sung at camp-meetings, one verse of which was as follows, viz.

"The Devil, Calvin, and Tom Paine,
May vent their hellish rage in vain;
Their doctrines shall be downward hurl'd,
The Methodists will take the world."

As to "publishing a revised and corrected edition of the Confession of Faith," it may be well to observe, that Calvinists are satisfied with it as it is, and do not consider the revision we have noticed an improvement.

CHAPTER XV.

FORGERIES.

In the present chapter we propose to advance a step, and notice some of the quotations which Arminians have forged for Calvinists. Whether this, when taken in connection with their professions of candour and kindness, will appear somewhat like "duplicity exposed," the reader must judge. But we will not detain him with preliminaries.

From a letter by the Rev. Augustus Toplady, to

* Objections to Calvinism, pp. 9, 10.

the Rev. John Wesley, dated January 9th, 1792, we make the following extracts, viz.

"For the information of some, who are unacquainted with the circumstances under which I write, I must premise, that in November, 1760, I published a two-shilling pamphlet, entitled 'The doctrine of absolute predestination, stated and asserted: with a preliminary discourse on the divine attributes, translated in a great measure from the Latin of Jerome Zanchius.' In the month of March, 1779, out sneaks a printed paper, (consisting of one sheet, folded in twelve pages; price one penny,) entitled 'The doctrine of absolute predestination, stated and asserted by the Rev. A. T———,' wherein you pretend to give an abridgment of the pamphlet referred to. But,

"1. Why did you not make your abridgment truly public?

"2. Why did you not abridge me faithfully and fairly? especially as you took the liberty of prefixing my name to it. You draw up a flimsy, partial compendium of Zanchius, which exhibits a few detached propositions placed in the most disadvantageous point of view, without including any part of the evidence on which they stand." "But this alone was not sufficient to encompass the desired end. . . . A false colouring must likewise be superinduced, by inserting a sentence now and then of your own foisting in; after which you close the motley piece with an entire paragraph, forged every word of it by yourself, and conclude all as you began, by subjoining the initials of my name, to make the ignorant believe that the whole, with your omissions, additions and alterations, actually came from me. An instance of audacity and falsehood hardly to be paralleled!"

"I am very far from desiring the reader to take my word in proof of the charge alleged against you. As an instance of your want of honour, veracity and

justice, I refer to the following paragraph, 1st, as published by me; 2, as quoted by you.

"1. When all the transactions of providence and grace are wound up in the last day, he (Christ) will then properly sit as judge, and openly publish and solemnly ratify, if I may so say, his everlasting decrees, by receiving the elect, body and soul, into glory; and by passing sentence on the non-elect, (*not for having done what they could not help*, but) for their wilful ignorance of divine things; and their obstinate unbelief; for their omissions of moral duty, and for their repeated iniquities and transgressions."*

"2. In the last day Christ will sit as a judge, and openly publish, and solemnly ratify his everlasting decrees, by receiving the elect into glory, and by passing sentence on the non-elect (*not for having done what they could not help*, but) for their wilful ignorance of divine things, and their obstinate unbelief, for their omissions of moral duty, and their repeated iniquities and transgressions, *which they could not help.*"†

The reader will notice that the words "which they could not help," are forged by Mr. Wesley, and put into Mr. Toplady's mouth, thus making him teach, directly the opposite of what he does teach. But Mr. Toplady continues,

"Whether my views of the doctrine itself be in fact right or wrong, is no part of the present inquiry. The question is, have you quoted me fairly? Blush, Mr. Wesley, if you are capable of blushing. For once, publicly acknowledge yourself to have acted criminally, 'unless,' to use your own words on another occasion, 'Shame and you have shaken hands and parted.'

* Doctrine of Absolute Predestination, page 93.
† Wesley's Abridgment, page 9.

"Your concluding paragraph, which you have the effrontery to palm on the world, runs thus, viz.

"'The sum of all is this: One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will, the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader, believe this or be damned. Witness my hand, A. T———.'"*

This last, the reader will discover is a forgery throughout; hence Mr. Toplady says of it, "In almost any other case a similar forgery would transmit the criminal to Virginia or Maryland, if not to Tyburn. If such an opponent can be deemed an honest man, where shall we find a knave? What would you think of me, were I infamous enough to abridge any treatise of yours, sprinkle it with interpolations, and conclude it thus: Reader, buy this book or be damned. Witness my hand, John Wesley!"

Such a crime in Geneva, in the days of Calvin, would have expelled the author of it from that city, and would now expel him from the Presbyterian Church.

In the advertisement to the second edition of the letter from which these extracts have been taken, Mr. Toplady says: "Nine months are now elapsed since the first publication of this letter, in all of which time Mr. Wesley has neither apologized for the misdemeanour which occasioned his hearing from me in this public manner, nor attempted to answer the charge entered against him."

Some time after (how long, the writer has not ascertained) Mr. Wesley came out with a reply, which begins thus:

"The Consequences Proved: 1st. Mr. Toplady, a young, bold man, lately published a pamphlet, an

* Wesley's Abridgment, page 12.

extract from which was soon after printed, concluding with these words:

"'The sum of all is this: One in twenty, suppose, of mankind is elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will: the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can.'

"2. A great outcry has been raised on that account, as though this was not a fair state of the case; and it has been vehemently affirmed, that no such consequences follow from the doctrine of absolute predestination.

"I calmly affirm it is a fair state of the case; this consequence does naturally and necessarily follow from the doctrine of absolute predestination, as here stated and defended by bold Mr. Augustus Toplady."

In reference to the historical truth of all we have here given, it may be proper to remark,

1. That it is fully confirmed by Southey.*

2. That the reply of Mr. Wesley here referred to, viz. "The Consequences Proved," is to be found in his works, and has been transferred by the General Conference to their stereotype volume of Doctrinal Tracts, while the abridgment of which Mr. Toplady complains, is not found in either.

3 That Mr. Wesley and the General Conference admit the publication complained of, but instead of acknowledging or retracting the forgery, make the admission in such a way as to call it "an extract" from the pamphlet of Mr. Toplady. "Mr. Toplady, a young, bold man, lately published a pamphlet, an extract from which was soon after published, concluding with these words:—'The sum of all is this,'" &c. that is, the "extract" from Mr. Toplady so concludes, and "calmly affirms it is a fair state of the case." The sum then of all is this; Mr. Wesley committed a

* See Life of Wesley, Vol. II. pp. 169, 170.

forgery, and he and the General Conference told a falsehood about it, and have made the forgery and falsehood a standard publication ever since. How they will all fare by the rule the former has laid down as essential to piety, is not for us to say. That rule is as follows, viz. "A man cannot have any religion who does to others what he would not they should do to him, if he were in the same circumstances."*

In addition to the above, Mr. Whitehead relates an act of Mr. Wesley, in reference to Mr. Toplady, not less discreditable to the former, than what we have noticed. "After Mr. Toplady's death," says Mr. Whitehead, "a woman came to Mr. Wesley, and related several things, as from her own personal knowledge, injurious to his character. She said some unpleasant things concering the manner of his death, which, as appears since, on good authority, were false. Mr Wesley very imprudently related in private conversation some things she had told him, supposing them to be true. What he said was soon reported to Mr. Toplady's friends, who publicly called on Mr. Wesley for proof of his assertions. Mr. Wesley made no reply, and the Calvinists immediately charged him with inventing the story, as well as propagating it."†

If then Mr. Wesley "made no reply"—took no notice of the call, did not give his authority for the injurious statement, but sanctioned it with the authority of his name, he was willing it should continue to be spread as having come from him. It therefore became his adopted child. Now, if any one will show that this was less criminal than to have originated the slander, he will deserve a premium. But let us hear Mr. Wesley himself:—"Hear evil of

* Sermon on The Way to the Kingdom.
† Life of Wesley, page 304.

no man. If there were no hearers, there would be no speakers of evil. And is not the receiver as bad as the thief?"*

Having noticed two forgeries, we will take up another.

In No. 32, page 96, of the Methodist Sunday-school and Youth's Library, the General Conference state the doctrine of predestination as follows, viz.

"That God has by an eternal and unchangeable decree predestinated to eternal damnation by far the greater part of mankind, and that absolutely, without any respect to their works, but only for the showing of the glory of his justice. And that for the bringing this about, he hath appointed these miserable souls necessarily to walk in their wicked ways, that so his justice may lay hold of them."

The Rev. Dr. Annan has well remarked, that "the minister who should dare broach such a sentiment in the Presbyterian Church would be brought to trial for heresy and impiety." The passage is put in quotation marks, and to fasten the impression upon the minds of the young and unsuspecting, they are presented with the usual array of garbled, mutilated, and perverted quotations from Calvin and others. And lest the direction of the whole should be misunderstood, the Confession of Faith, Chapter III. Section 5, comes in for a full share. "Chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, without any foresight of faith and good works," omitting what immediately follows, viz. "As conditions or causes moving hereto."

We will next present the reader, without much comment, with a few samples of such forgeries as abound in the Doctrinal Tracts. And here we may remark, that it is not uncommon to give as the language of another, such language as he does not use.

* Sermon on The Cure of Evil Speaking.

In that case, however, if honesty is intended, care is taken not to misstate his sentiments, nor to conceal the fact, that he is not the author of the language ascribed to him. The reverse of this is true of the forgeries we are about to present.

On page 46, the Calvinist is represented as saying, "He is afraid, if he does not hold election, he must hold free will, and so rob God of his glory in man's salvation." The above sentence is placed between quotation marks, so that the reader is left to infer, (without there being anything in the connection to show to the contrary) that it is a quotation from some Calvinistic author, and that Calvinists deny the free agency of man. Yet strange to tell, Chap. IX. of the Confession of Faith is immediately and (what is very remarkable) correctly quoted, to show that they maintain his free agency. "God hath endowed the will of man with that natural liberty that it is neither forced, nor by an absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil." Nor is it less remarkable, that Calvin should be correctly referred to also, as teaching the same doctrine.*

Again, on page 47, a quotation is in like manner forged, which represents the Calvinist as saying, "If man has any free will, God cannot have the whole glory of his salvation."

So also in reply to the following interrogatories on page 54, such answers are forged, as no Calvinist ever made, viz.

"Why does this man sin? 'He cannot cease from sin.' Why cannot he cease from sin? 'Because he has no saving grace? Because God of his own good pleasure, hath eternally decreed not to give it him.' Is he then under an unavoidable necessity of sinning? 'Yes, as much as a stone is of falling. He never had any more power to cease from evil than a stone has to

* See Doctrinal Tracts, p. 154.

hang in the air.' And shall this man, for not doing what he never could do, and for doing what he never could avoid, be sentenced to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? 'Yes, because it is the sovereign will of God.'"

Now, the writer takes it upon him to say, these answers, and the doctrine contained in them, are Arminian forgeries throughout. Again, we have the following, pp. 95, 96, viz. "Some are not afraid to assert, that 'God by an eternal and unchangeable decree, hath predestinated to eternal damnation the far greater part of mankind, and that absolutely, without any respect to their works, but only for the showing the glory of his justice; and that for the bringing this about, he hath appointed these miserable souls necessarily to walk in their wicked ways, that so his justice may lay hold on them. And that he justly condemns these although he hath withheld from them that grace by which alone they could have laid hold of salvation, as having decreed (without any respect to their works) that they shall not obey; and that the gospel which he publicly invites them to accept, shall never prove effectual for their salvation, but only serve to aggravate their guilt and occasion their greater damnation.'"

"Some are not afraid to assert," &c. Now, although the above is stated and marked as a quotation, and there is nothing in the connection that would lead to any other inference, it is a forgery from beginning to end. The same may be said of the following, on page 156, viz. "But is it (the grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation,) free for all, as well as in all? To this, some have answered, 'NO: it is free only for those whom God hath ordained to life; and they are but a little flock. The greater part of mankind God hath ordained unto death; and it is not free for them. Them God hateth; and therefore before they were born, decreed they should die eternally. And this he

absolutely decreed, because so was his good pleasure; because it was his sovereign will. Accordingly, they were born to this, to be destroyed body and soul in hell. And they grow under the irrevocable curse of God, without any possibility of redemption. For what grace God gives, he gives only for this, to increase, not to prevent their damnation.'"

We have now presented the reader with a few samples of the forgeries that are to be found in the Methodist Doctrinal Tracts. He has seen something of the spirit of detraction that exists in that Church, and how it was carried on in England, and in this country; it may not be amiss therefore, to inform him with whom, and when, it originated.

Dr. Coke was the first who was ordained a Bishop for the American Colonies. Writing to Mr. Wesley from Ireland, some time after that event, he says he "would as soon commit adultery as preach publicly against the church." "But" says Mr. Whitehead, "I must say this of the doctor, that with respect to adultery, I think him very innocent; but in bringing railing accusations against others, I think him very guilty; and it is very probable that the Methodist Episcopal Church now forming in England will have the same foundation as it had in America. The founders of it begin with judging and condemning others who dissent from them, and exalting themselves; some very glaring instances of which have already appeared. I leave others to judge of the probable consequences."*

From this we learn that the "founders" of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, "began with judging, and condemning others who dissented from them" in a "very glaring" manner, "and (in) exalting themselves."

We will close this chapter with what will doubtless appear to the reader as it does to us, a little ahead of

* Life of Wesley, page 261.

any of the inconsistencies we have had under review. In 1843 the Rev. G. W. Musgrave published a pamphlet entitled "Polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States," &c., in which occurs the following sentence, viz. "For many years, and without the slightest provocation, the General Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal church, under the care and control of the General Conference have been issuing hostile and offensive publications against the Presbyterian Church."

In a "Reply" to that pamphlet, by the Rev. David Meredith Reese, A. M., M. D., a local preacher of that Church, we have the following on page 7, viz.

"No, Rev. Sir, you will forgive my abrupt contradiction of your Reverence thus early, when I assure you that no Tract has ever been issued by any authority in the Methodist Episcopal Church, against the Presbyterian Church or against any other evangelical denomination."*

Let us see. The Calvinistic Controversy is "published by Waugh and Mason, for the Methodist Episcopal Church." In it Dr. Fisk says, pp. 8, 9, "With these definitions (of predestination) agree all the Calvinistic divines in Europe and America. To this view of predestination we have objected." "It is the object of the sermon and of the following controversy, to show that Calvinistic predestination is, on any ground of consistency, utterly irreconcilable with mental freedom."

If then, Dr. Fisk writes against a doctrine held by "all the Calvinistic divines of Europe and America," he must write "against the Presbyterian Church."

Again: The Methodist Doctrinal Tracts are "published by order of the General Conference" "for the Methodist Episcopal church." Tract VIII. begins

* Dr. Reese resides in the city of Baltimore.

with an address "to all predestinarians," and Tract V "joins issue with every asserter of" that doctrine.

"Duplicity Exposed" is issued by the same authority, for the same Church. In it the "Associated Congregational and Presbyterian Churches" are expressly named, as obnoxious to the charges it prefers—and it is the declared "object of this tract not to controvert or disprove the horrid sentiments it (the Confession of Faith) discloses, but simply to demonstrate that such sentiments are held and propagated, while many who affect to disavow them, are endeavouring to suit them to the popular taste, by exhibiting them in a disguising dress." "To show that the Associated Congregational and Presbyterian Churches do believe and teach the same doctrine," &c., pp. 8, 9. The "assurance" then "that no tract has ever been issued by any authority in the Methodist Episcopal Church, against the Presbyterian Church, or against any other evangelical denomination," is something that "outherods Herod." This, with the false charges, misrepresentations, garblings, mutilatings, and forgeries, we have noticed, may be set down among the "pious frauds" of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

THE Rev. R. S. Foster, speaking of Calvinists, says, "The final perseverance of the saints, with them, is a frankly avowed and cherished sentiment. To rob them of this, would be to rob them of one of their gods."*

After this, he goes on to say, "The doctrine is

* Objections to Calvinism, page 178.

without warrant from the word of God. . . . No passage clearly teaches it; none necessarily infers it; no principle of revelation sanctions it. If it could be true, its truth never can be derived from the Bible," &c.*

"Its logical consequences are antagonistic to the reason and nature of man, to the genius of religion, and to the consciousness of our species."†

Having concluded what we wished to say of forged quotations, &c., we proceed to show that this is a doctrine taught by standard writers in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"The order of the great work of salvation," says Dr. Adam Clarke, is—1. Conviction of sin. 2. Conversion from sin. 3. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, &c. 4. Justification or pardon, &c. 5. Sanctification, &c. 6. Perseverance in the state of sanctification, &c. 7. Glorification."‡

This, the reader will observe, is laid down as the "order of the great work of salvation," and that one link in the chain, is "perseverance in the state of sanctification;" in other words, "the perseverance of the saints." Clarke's Theology, it is to be recollected, is a selection made from the writings of that divine by the General Conference; so that "perseverance in the state of sanctification" is thus endorsed by that body, as one of the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church. "With regard to final perseverance," says Wesley, "I am inclined to believe, there is a state attainable in this life, from which a man cannot finally fall; and that he has attained this who can say, 'old things are passed away; all things are become new.'"§

"I am inclined to believe." Here Mr. Wesley expresses some doubt; in another place, however, he

* Objections to Calvinism, p. 179.
† Ibid. p. 199.
‡ Clarke's Theology, page 148.
§ Works, Vol. III. p. 289.

is very decided. Thus, after commenting on Rom. viii. 29, 30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." He asks, "What is it then we learn from this whole account? It is this, and nothing more. 1. God knows all believers. 2. Wills that they should be saved from sin. 3. To that end justifies them. 4. Sanctifies: and 5. Takes them to glory."*

If then, God wills the salvation of all believers, justifies, sanctifies, and takes them to glory, what is this but the perseverance and final salvation of all the saints? What is still more remarkable, is that the inference here stated is drawn from one of the strongest passages of Scripture that Calvinists adduce to prove that doctrine.

Again, in his sermon on "Justification by Faith," he says, "To him that is justified or forgiven, God will not impute sin to his condemnation. He will not condemn him on that account, either in this world or in that which is to come. . . . . And from the time we are accepted through the beloved, reconciled to God through his blood, he loves, and blesses, and watches over us for good, even as if we had never sinned."

If then, "to him that is forgiven, God will not impute sin to his condemnation," "either in this world or in that which is to come," well may the pardoned sinner break out in the following lines of one of the Methodist Hymns, viz.

"For Jesus my Lord is now my defence;
I trust in his word, none plucks me from thence;
For sorrow and sadness I joy shall receive,
And share in the gladness of all that believe."†

* Sermon on Predestination. † Hymn 287.

On that doctrine, Mr. Watson is clear in his sermon on Prov. iv. 18. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

"The just man here mentioned," he says, "is not the man who begins merely, but who likewise perseveres. Not he who only enters the gate, but who continues in the path. Nothing can be more affecting than to see so solemn a matter as religion taken up on light grounds and as lightly abandoned; as though it were a question of no moment whether we served God or served him not. Nor does anything incur greater guilt, or expose to greater danger. 'Better had it been for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.' Seven devils entered where only one had been before, and the last state was worse than the first. But here you have the man of steadfastness and perseverance. His path is no meteor which gleams and expires. No rising day lowering into mist and darkness. It is the path of the cloudless light of heaven. It shineth yet more and more. Such is his continual progress in holiness and happiness."

Mr. Watson here plainly distinguished between the professed Christian who "takes up religion as a solemn matter," and the other, who "takes it up on light grounds." In other words—between the one who builds "on a rock," Matt. vii. 24, and the other who builds "on the sand." Matt. vii. 26. The one "who receiveth good seed into good ground, and bringeth forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty," Matt. xiii. 23; and the other who "having no root in himself, endureth but for a while." Matt. xiii. 21. The one, he correctly says, "is a man of steadfastness and perseverance," the other, a "meteor which gleams and expires." The one "is the path of the cloudless light of heaven, that shineth yet

more and more," the other soon "lowers into mist and darkness." No Calvinist could state the doctrine of the saints' perseverance more distinctly and decidedly.

In the Doctrinal Tracts, page 163, the General Conference says, "That assurance of faith which these enjoy, (who have the witness of the Spirit,) excludes all doubt and fear. It excludes all kind of doubt and fear concerning their future perseverance; though it is not properly an assurance of what is future, but only of what now is." "It excludes all kind of doubt and fear concerning their final perseverance!" How remarkably this accords with the Scriptures: "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer. xxxii. 24.

Accordingly, Paul, addressing believers, says, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When (therefore) Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. iii. 33. "Because I live, ye shall live also." John xiv. 19. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii. 38, 39. It is not at all wonderful, therefore, that "the assurance of faith which they enjoy (who have the witness of the Spirit, bearing witness with their spirit that they are the children of God,) should exclude all kind of doubt and fear concerning their future perseverance."

Again, the General Conference says, "There is great reason to hope, that Esau (as well as Jacob) is now in Abraham's bosom. For although for a time, 'he hated Jacob,' and afterwards came against him 'with four hundred men,' very probably designing to take revenge for the injuries he had sustained; we

find that when they met, 'Esau ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him;' so thoroughly had God changed his heart! And why should we doubt but that happy change continued?"*

Although a man's heart towards his fellow-man may be changed from enmity to love, without being so changed towards God, and although there is nothing in the connection, nor in the subsequent history of Esau, which would lead us to suppose that the change in him extended any farther than his brother; yet, certainly, if that change did take place which the General Conference suppose, then as "the assurance of faith which they enjoy, who have the witness of the Spirit bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, excludes all kind of doubt and fear concerning their future perseverance," it may well be asked, "why should we doubt but that happy change continued?"

We will next call attention to a few quotations from the Methodist Hymn-Book. Our edition is the one in use before the division of the Church. In Hymn 17, verse 4, we have the following, viz.

"Our life with thee we hide,
Above the furious blast;
And shelter'd in thy wounds abide,
Till all the storms be past."

The reader will discover that there is allusion here to the passage in Colossians, already quoted, viz. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," &c. Accordingly, as "the assurance of faith, which they enjoy who have the witness of the Spirit, excludes all kind of doubt and fear concerning their future perseverance," they here express entire confidence that they will "abide" faithful, or in other words, will persevere,

"Till all the storms be past."

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 59.

In several other hymns, the same sentiment is expressed, with even greater clearness. Thus, speaking of the believer's union with Christ, in Hymn 260, he is represented as saying,

"No mortal doth know, what he can bestow,
What light, strength, and comfort; go after him, go;
Lo, onward I move, to a city above,
None guesses how wondrous my journey will prove.

Great spoils I shall win, from death, hell and sin,
Midst outward afflictions, shall feel Christ within;
And when I'm to die, receive me, I'll cry,
For Jesus hath loved me, I cannot tell why.

But this I do find, we two are so joined,
He'll not live in glory, and leave me behind,
So, this is the race, I'm running through grace,
Henceforth till admitted to see my Lord's face."

In these verses, the Christian does not indulge a doubt of a successful journey, of securing great spoils, and of being so united to Christ, that he will dwell with him for ever. There is not a hint about, "If I persevere."

Again, our Saviour says to his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also." And the Apostle Paul says, Rom. v. 10, "if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Here the safety of God's people is asserted in language strong and explicit. In accordance with it we have the following lines in an address to the Saviour, in the Methodist Hymn-Book:

"We clap our hands exulting,
In thine Almighty favour;
The love divine that made us thine,
Can keep us thine for ever.

Thou dost conduct thy people,
Through torrents of temptation;
Nor will we fear, when thou art near,
The fire of tribulation.

The world with sin and Satan,
In vain our march opposes;
By thee we shall break through them all,
And sing the song of Moses."*

So also in the Doctrinal Tracts, as already quoted, viz. "That assurance of faith which those enjoy (who have the witness of the Spirit,) excludes all kind of doubt and fear concerning their future perseverance."

With this we close our argument on this part of our subject, having shown that the final perseverance of the saints is a doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

We will show next, that it is a doctrine which that Church rejects.

The General Conference, although they very decidedly reject the doctrine, do not appear to see matters in so clear a light as Mr. Foster. Accordingly they say, they are "sensible (that) either side of this question is attended with great difficulties; such as reason alone could never remove."†

While then, Mr. Foster says the "logical consequences" (of this doctrine) "are antagonistic to the reason and nature of man," &c., the General Conference say "either side of this question is attended with difficulties such as reason alone could never remove," and "therefore" they appeal "to the law and to the testimony," and say "on this authority they believe a saint who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly. 1. 'For thus saith the Lord, When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.'" Ezek. xviii. 24. They then go on to prove, 1st, that the death here threatened

* Hymn 275. † Doctrinal Tracts, page 211.

is eternal death, and, 2. That a saint may fall and perish.*

But if this be true, it is doubtful whether a single individual of the human family has entered heaven except those who die in infancy. For while the argument is intended to prove a fall from grace, it admits of no recovery. "In his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, shall he die." Noah was a righteous man, Gen. vii. 1; but Noah got drunk, Gen. ix. 21, therefore Noah is in hell. Abraham was a righteous man, but Abraham told a falsehood, and denied that Sarah was his wife, Gen. xii. 19, therefore Abraham is in hell. Moses was a righteous man, but in a fit of passion he dashed in pieces the tables of the Lord, and did not "sanctify the Lord in the presence of the people, at the waters of Meribah Kadesh," therefore Moses is in hell. Job was a righteous man, yet he murmured against the dealings of Providence, therefore Job is in hell. The Apostle Peter was a righteous man, but he denied his Lord with oaths and curses, therefore he is in hell, &c., &c. So that, according to the General Conference, no pious man that sins, can find any place for repentance. "In his trespasses that he hath trespassed, and in his sins that he hath sinned *shall* he die." If this interpretation were carried out in practice, revivals of religion in the Methodist Church would often be but flimsy affairs; for they often consist in working over old materials, the third or fourth time.

These divines have evidently fallen into an error, first, in supposing that by a "righteous" man, we are necessarily to understand a pious man. That such is its meaning frequently, is admitted; but that it has that meaning always, is denied. Thus in reference to the duties of civil officers, it is said, Deut. xxv. 1,

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 211—214.

"If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge between them, then they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked." Here evidently, nothing more is meant by a righteous man, than one who comes before the judges with a righteous cause. So also in 1 Kings viii. 31, 32, "If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house; then hear thou in heaven, and do and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness."

Again, when Solomon gave sentence to put Joab to death, he said "The Lord shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword."*

Again, when in accordance with the orders of Jehu, the seventy sons of Ahab were slain, and their heads laid at the gate of Jezreel, Jehu went out and said to the people, "Ye be righteous."†

Here then, are four cases in which the word "righteous" is applied to individuals, without piety being supposed in any of them.

The second error into which Mr. Wesley and the General Conference have fallen, is, in taking it for granted that the death threatened in the passage they adduce, refers not to temporal, but to eternal death.

In reference to civil officers, it is said, Deut. xvi. 19, "Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons." And in Deut. xxiv. 16, it is said, "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children; neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin." Accordingly, when king Amaziah "slew

* 1 Kings ii. 32. † 2 Kings x. 9.

his servants which had slain the king his father; but the children of the murderers he slew not: according to that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin." 2 Kings, xiv. 5, 6.

We are now prepared to come at the meaning of the passage before us, as the whole connection shows.

The Jews, like other nations punished some sins with death, and their civil officers were required to inflict that penalty on the offender, irrespective of his standing in society. Accordingly we have the instructions to that effect given in Deuteronomy, repeated in Ezekiel: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." "When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be mentioned;" (as a bar between him and justice,) "in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." Ezek. xviii. 20, 24.

But notwithstanding the meaning of the passage is thus obvious, Arminians, to prove that a saint may fall from grace, have been at great pains so to pervert it, as to make a righteous or just man, necessarily mean a pious man, and the death of the body, mean the eternal death of the soul.

The General Conference continues: "Secondly, one who is endued with faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly. For thus

saith the inspired Apostle, "War a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck." 1 Tim. i. 18, 19.

"Observe 1. These men (such as Hymeneus and Alexander,) had once the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, which they once had, or they could not have put it away.

"Observe 2. They made shipwreck of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it; for a vessel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally lost. And the Apostle himself mentions one of these two as irrecoverably lost. 'Alexander did me much evil, the Lord reward him according to his works.' 2 Tim. iv. 14. Therefore, one who is endued with faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly."*

To this we reply, 1. If it be true, then what is stated in Hymn 607 of the Methodist Hymn-Book, is not true, viz.

"Thy saints in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer though they die."

Nor that which is stated in Hymn 11th, viz.

"The Lord shall in your front appear,
And lead the pompous triumph on,
His glory shall bring up the rear,
And perfect what his grace begun."

2. It is not said that the faith here referred to "purifies the heart."

3. That a man may have a good conscience without being converted, is evident from what Paul says of himself before his conversion, viz. "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Acts xxiii. 1, compared with 1 Tim. i. 13, Acts xxvi. 9.

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 215.

4. That the faith of which "shipwreck" was made, refers to the doctrine of the gospel, and not to the faith which follows a vital union with Christ, is evident from 2 Tim. ii. 18: "Hymeneus and Philetus concerning the truth have erred, in saying the resurrection is passed already, and have overthrown the faith of some." See also 2 Peter ii. 22.

5. There is no evidence whatever, that "Alexander who did Paul much evil," is the Alexander who "made shipwreck of the faith."

6. The apostle, after mentioning some apostates from the faith, viz. Hymeneus and Philetus, expressly distinguishes them from true saints in the next verse —"nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Tim. ii. 19. "Having this seal." "One object of a seal, is to distinguish property, and so the Lord distinguishes them that are his. Another object of it is, to confirm. Thus a king sets his seal to his decrees—a man sets his seal to a bond, &c., and thus God makes his foundation sure. A third object of a seal is to preserve inviolate. Thus we seal a letter, and thus the sepulchre in which our Saviour was buried was sealed; so that in whatsoever sense we understand the word, it evidently here denotes God's special care of his people.

"4. It is set on them to save them from destruction. Thus it was said to the destroying angel, Rev. vii. 3, 'Hurt not the earth, &c., till we have sealed the servants of God on their foreheads.'

"5. It is a pledge of future deliverance: Thus, 2 Cor. i. 22, 23. 'Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of his spirit in our hearts.'"

An "earnest" is a part given as a pledge that the remainder will be given. Thus, Eph. i. 13, 14, "In whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with

the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." Eph. iv. 30, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

"The question now arises, will not the saints, after they have been thus sealed, be known of God, and be established and saved from destruction? And after they have received the seal of the Spirit as an earnest of heaven, will they be disappointed about the remainder? If so, it will make the seal of God a less security than the seal of his creatures. It is to be observed also, that this seal is to secure the saints 'unto the day of redemption,' after which they will be in no danger."

And now, the Apostle John, as if to seal all that has been said of Hymeneus, and Alexander, and all other apostates, says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." 1 John ii. 19.

"They were not of us." Here the Apostle uses a tense, which utterly forbids the supposition that such persons were ever pious. His assertion is equivalent to, "If they had ever been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us."

But, continues the Conference, "Thirdly, those who are engrafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual invisible church, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly. For thus saith the apostle, 'Some of the branches were broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree. Be not high minded, but fear. If God spared not the natural branches, take heed, lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God! On them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness. Otherwise thou shalt be cut off.' Rom. xi. 17, 20, 22.

"We may here observe, 1. The persons spoken of, were actually grafted into the olive tree.

"2. This olive tree is not barely the outward visible church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the text, 'If the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches.' 'And (verse 20) because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.'

"3. These holy believers were liable to be cut off from the invisible church, into which they were then grafted.

"4. There is not the least intimation of those who were so cut off, being ever engrafted in again. Therefore, those who are grafted into the good olive tree, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly."*

In reply to this, we admit that the "olive tree" means the church. We farther admit, that the Jews, as a nation, were engrafted into the olive tree, or church. But although in being possessed of "the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 1, 2; they "partook of the root and fatness of the olive tree," Rom. xi. 17; "they were not all children, because they were the seed of Abraham." Rom. ix. 7. It no more follows then, because they were blessed with a pious ancestry, and had been brought into the church externally, by a sacred rite, that those "branches" which "were broken off because of unbelief," Rom. xii. 17, 20, must at some time have been truly pious, than that the baptized children of pious parents must be pious now. If then, any of the branches that were broken off, were never pious, (and we know they were not,) how could they have fallen from grace in the sense contended for? That not a saint was lost by the breaking off of some of the branches, is evident from what is said in the first part of the chapter, "God hath not cast away

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 217.

his people whom he foreknew." "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom. xi. 2, 7

But, continues the General Conference again, "Those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, 'I am the vine, ye are the branches,' may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly. For thus saith our blessed Lord himself, 'I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.' John xv. 1, 6. Here we may observe, 1. The persons spoken of, were in Christ, branches of the true vine. 2. Some of these branches abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away. 3. The branches which abide not are cast forth, cast out of Christ and his church. 4. They are not only cast forth, but are withered, consequently never grafted in again. Nay, 5. They are not only cast forth and withered, but also cast into the fire, and so they are burned. It is not possible for words more strongly to declare that even those who are now branches of the true vine, may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly."*

Notwithstanding this strong confidence, we may safely admit the whole argument, without admitting the doctrine of falling from grace. For as "there are some in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit," Rom. viii. 1, it follows that there are some "in Christ Jesus who walk after the flesh" merely. In other words, as a man may be in the church without piety, he may be in Christ by profession only. "For he is not a Jew," who is one outwardly, neither

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 220, 221.

is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." Rom. ii. 28, 29. "Every branch" therefore of the vine, that beareth not fruit, may be taken away and wither" for want of the restraints and wholesome influences of the Church, "and be cast into the fire and burned," without having ever derived more nourishment from Christ than those branches derived from the olive tree, that "were broken off because of unbelief," and who were never pious.

Having thus disposed of a fourth objection, we proceed.

"Fifthly, those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into these pollutions and perish everlastingly. For thus saith the Apostle Peter, 'If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' (the only possible way of escaping them,) 'they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.' 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

"That the knowledge they had attained was an inward experimental knowledge, is evident from that other expression—'they had escaped the pollutions of the world,' an expression, parallel to that in the preceding chapter, verse 4, 'Having escaped the corruption that is in the world.' And in both chapters this effect is ascribed to the same cause, termed in the first, 'the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue.' In the second, more explicitly, 'the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' And yet they lost that experimental knowledge of Christ, and the way of righteousness. They fell back

into the same pollutions they had escaped, and were again entangled and overcome. They 'turned from the holy commandment delivered unto them,' so that their latter end was worse than the beginning."*

To this we reply, the animals with which these apostates are in the next verse compared, viz. dogs and swine, forbid the idea of their having undergone anything more than an external reformation. A dog having disgorged the pollutions of his stomach, swallows it again; and the swine that is washed from the defilement of the mire, returns to it again. If then, these animals may for a time put off their pollutions without a change of nature, surely men, who, from their principles and habits are compared to them, may undergo a great external reformation, and make a profession of religion without a change of heart. And when they go back to their old habits, nothing could more strikingly express what they do, than to say, "It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." 2 Pet. ii. 22.

As to what is said of their having "escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Christ," no doubt many of the gentiles underwent a great external reformation through the preaching of the Apostles; yet "having no root in themselves, they endured but for a while." Matt. xiii. 21. And being "again entangled and overcome," like all relapses, "the latter end was worse than the beginning."

But let us hear the General Conference again.

"Sixthly, those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless, so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly. For thus saith the

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 223, 224.

inspired writer to the Hebrews, 'It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost—if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.' Heb. vi. 4, 6.

"Must not every unprejudiced person see the expressions here used are so strong and clear, that they cannot, without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers?

"'They were once enlightened,' an expression familiar with the Apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So, 'the God of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward them that believe.' Eph. i. 17—19. So again: 'God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' 2 Cor. iv. 6. This is the light which no unbelievers have. They are utter strangers to such enlightening. 'The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them.' Verse 4.

"'They had tasted of the heavenly gift, (emphatically so called,) and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.' So St. Peter likewise couples them together. 'Be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,' Acts ii. 38; whereby the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts with all the other fruits of the Spirit. Yea, it is remarkable that our Lord himself, in his grand commission to St. Paul, (to which the Apostle probably alludes in these words,) comprises all these three

particulars: 'I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,' (here contracted into that one expression, 'they were enlightened,') that they may receive 'forgiveness of sins,' ('the heavenly gift') 'and an inheritance among them that are sanctified,' Acts xxvi. 18, which are made 'partakers of the Holy Ghost' of all the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.

"The expression, 'They tasted of the heavenly gift,' is taken from the Psalmist, 'Taste and see that the Lord is good.' Psalm xxxiv. 8. As if he had said, 'Be ye assured of his love as of anything ye see with your eyes. And let the assurance thereof be sweet to your soul, as honey is to your tongue.'

"And yet those who had been thus 'enlightened,' had 'tasted' this 'gift,' and been thus 'partakers of the Holy Ghost,' so 'fell away,' that it was impossible to renew them again to repentance."*

But notwithstanding the General Conference are so sure that "the expressions" under consideration "cannot be understood of any but true believers," without noticing the sophistries by which they undertake to sustain their position, we undertake to show that they do not necessarily imply any such thing. We will take them up in the order in which they stand.

"Those who were once enlightened." Num. xxiv. 2, 3, &c. "And the Spirit of God came upon Balaam, and he took up his parable and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are opened hath said," &c. And yet this Balaam "so loved the wages of unrighteousness," 2 Peter ii. 15, that in the face of the express command of God, Num. xxii. 12, he was intensely anxious to curse the people of God that he might obtain the wages. See Num. xxii. 23.

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp, 225, 226.

"And have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Matt. x. 1—4. "And when Jesus had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve Apostles are these: the first, Simon, &c., and Judas Iscariot who also betrayed him." Did not Judas Iscariot then, taste of the heavenly gift, and partake of the Holy Ghost in his miraculous powers? Yet he was at no time a believer, John vi. 64, and in his disposition he resembled the devil. John vi. 70.

"And have tasted of the good word of God." Matt. xiii. 20, 21. "But he that received the seed in stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet he hath not root in himself, but endureth for a while."

"And (have tasted) of the powers of the world to come." Acts xxiv. 25. "And as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, Felix trembled, and said, Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee."*

And thus, persons may experience every thing stated in this awful passage, without being truly converted to God.

The reader will notice the consequences of falling from grace. "It is impossible to renew them again to repentance." This part of this passage is strangely overlooked by Arminians. Admitting that they have made out their case, viz. that "If they shall fall away," implies that pious men may fall from grace, "it is impossible to renew them again to repentance," implies that they can never be restored, which, if allowed, would almost break up Arminian salvation.

* Calvinistic Magazine.

"But," asks Mr. Wesley, "does not Christ say, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life?' John iii. 36, 'and he that believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life?'" verse 24. In reply to which he says, "I answer, 1. The love of God is everlasting life. It is, in substance, the life of heaven. Now every one that believes, loves God, and therefore 'hath everlasting life.' 2. 'Every one that believes' is, therefore, 'passed from death unto life;' and, 3. 'Shall not come into condemnation,' if he endureth in the faith unto the end, according to our Lord's own words, 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved;' and 'Verily I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.'" John viii. 51.*

Here, it is admitted, that "every one that believes, loves God," but it is contended, that "the love of God is the everlasting life" referred to, by Christ, when he says, "He that believeth, hath everlasting life." Let us try a single passage by this new translation.

Christ says, John x. 27, 28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish," &c. Now, according to the new translation, when Christ says, "I give unto them eternal life," it should be, "I give unto them the love of God." But this brings up a difficulty. Those who follow Christ, must, at the same time, love him; and if they love him, they will love God; then it will follow, that when he says, "I give unto them eternal life," he means to say, "I give to those that love God, the love of God." Since, therefore, the rendering of Mr. Wesley and the General Conference involves such an absurdity, we greatly prefer the rendering of Christ.

Here, however, we are met by alleged facts, and as a Quaker once remarked to us, "facts are facts."

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 216.

"Adam," it is said, "was made in the image of God," yet he fell; and certain "angels, which kept not their first estate, are reserved in everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day." Why then, may not Christians fall? God loved these angels, and our progenitors, as much as he loves us, and had as much power to uphold them."*

To this we reply. Under the old covenant of works, man was entrusted with grace, yet soon became a bankrupt. But under the new covenant of grace, Christ, who is "made a surety of a better testament," Heb. vi. 22, "is the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises," Heb. vii. 6. He, therefore, retains the stock of grace for his people in his own hands, and imparts it to them according to their necessities. Hence, he says, "My grace is sufficient for thee," 2 Cor. xii. 9; "and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Deut. xxxiii. 25. Upon such a surety, therefore, and this "better covenant," and these "better promises," the believer surely may rely. In reference to angels, we suppose that, like our first parents, they, for a time, were in a state of trial, and that as our first parents by "eating of the tree of life would have lived for ever," Gen. iii. 29, with the "angels who kept their first estate," the day of trial is over. "But," says the Rev. J. L. Gilbert, of the Baltimore Conference, "There is another prominent example of final apostacy, contained in the Scriptures, which our author (Rev. H. H. Paine,) has seen fit to pass by in silence, notwithstanding his pledge to notice the strongest objections.

. I wonder if he never heard of the case of Saul, king of Israel, as an objection to his favourite doctrine, of whom it is said, 'God gave him another heart . . and the Spirit of God came upon him,' &c. But how was it with Saul when he rebelled against the will of

* Compendium of Methodism, page 280.

God? Was he a sickly Christian too? We are told, 1 Sam. xxxi. 14, 'But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul,' and did he ever recover? No, never, for the Bible assures us that he lived a life of wickedness, and died a violent and horrible death, a victim of his own spear, a self-murderer."*

From the fact that "God gave to Saul another heart," and "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him," it is inferred that he was thereby made a pious man; and because "the Spirit of the Lord departed from him," it is inferred that he lost his piety. Let us see. By comparing 1 Sam. xiii. 1, with 1 Sam. xiv. 35, we learn that Saul was king over Israel more than two years before "he built an altar unto the Lord," and that "was the first he built."

What! a man king over the people of God more than two years before he built the first altar to the Lord he ever built, and he a pious man? Such an idea is out of the question. Besides, nearly every recorded act of Saul of a religious character, after his supposed conversion, savours far more of rash impiety than it does of piety. If then the tree may be known by its fruit, this was a corrupt tree. What then are we to understand by the expressions, "God gave him another heart;" "the Spirit of God came upon him," and "the Spirit of the Lord departed from him?" In the tenth chapter of 1st Samuel, we learn that immediately after he was anointed king, the prophet told him, that when, on his journey home, he should come to a certain place, he would be met by a company of prophets prophesying—that "the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him, and he would prophesy, and be turned into another man," that is, into a prophet. Accordingly, when he came to the place that had been designated, and the prophets met him, "the Spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied

* Review of Mr. Paine's Sermon, page 26.

among them, and the people said one to another, Is Saul also, among the prophets?" Here then, we suppose, is the fulfilment of all that was meant by the expressions, "God gave him another heart," and "the Spirit of God came upon him." Now, unless it can be shown that because a man was a true prophet he was necessarily pious, it cannot be shown that Saul was pious. We can show exactly to the contrary. When Paul says, "Though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not charity, I am nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 2, he seems to intimate that a man might be a true prophet without being himself pious. Accordingly, we read of Balaam, who although a true prophet, yet so "loved the wages of unrighteousness," 2 Pet. ii. 15, that he made great effort to pronounce a prophetic curse upon the people of God, that he might obtain the wages, though he had been forbidden by the Almighty to do so. Num. xxii. xxiii. xxiv.

Our Saviour speaks of some also, to whom he will say in the day of judgment, although they had prophesied in his name, "I never knew you." Matt. vii. 23. As then "the Spirit of God came upon Saul" so as to make him a prophet, without making him pious, surely, when it "departed from him" it does not follow that he lost his piety. If he did, he must have lost what he had not possessed.

We come next to the case of David. His case is stated thus:

"Mr. Paine has it, that when David's soul was polluted by adultery, and stained with the blood of (Uriah), he was nothing more at worst than (a) sickly Christian," (thus) "teaching that a man may be an adulterer and murderer, and yet be a Christian."*

In reply to this, we remark, that true piety may exist in connection with practices under particular

* Gilbert's Review of Mr. Paine's Sermon, pp. 24, 25.

circumstances, whereas it could not exist in connection with the same practices, if the circumstances are what they often are in other places. That there are rare cases of piety among the Roman Catholics, no well-informed person doubts; yet piety could not exist in connection with such mummeries among Protestants. Concubinage or polygamy would be utterly inconsistent with piety in any part of Christendom now; yet Abraham, the father of the faithful, had a wife and a concubine; and the patriarch Jacob, of whose piety no one doubts, had two wives and several concubines. Without a word of revelation on the subject beyond the fact, that one of each sex was created at the beginning, these good men fell in with what was a general custom around them, and seem never to have supposed that in so doing there was the least impropriety. The same may be said of the pious kings of Israel also, and their numerous wives, and numerous concubines.

In the days of David, monarchy and tyranny may be said to have been universal. It is not so astonishing, therefore, that he should have committed a sin which would have scarcely been considered a crime in any other sovereign of that day. Although then, it is a lasting stain upon his character, yet when we hear him confess, as soon as he is charged with the offence, "I have sinned," 2 Sam. xii. 7—13, and see the evidence of his deep repentance, Psalm li., we cannot reasonably doubt of a pious principle within. But if such was the penitence of David for a sin committed under the comparatively dim light in which he lived, is not the impenitence of Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Fisk, and the General Conference, for their misrepresentations, garblings, forgeries, &c., committed under the blaze of a meridian sun, far stronger evidence that they themselves had fallen from grace than that David had?

We come to notice next, what is said of Solomon.

In Tract No. 13 of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we have his case stated as follows, viz. "David in giving advice to his son Solomon, exhorts him thus: 'And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts; and understandeth the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.' 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

"But it is manifest that Solomon failed in his duty, and did forsake the Lord. Some of the last accounts we have of him, except the bare mention of his death, are these—'Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites; and Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord.' 1 Kings xi. 5, 6.

"Again, the word of inspiration declares, 'Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem; and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.' 'And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart' (observe, 'his heart') 'was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him.' 1 Kings xi. 7, 9. We read positively, verse 40, that 'Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam.' And the Apostle John assures us, that 'Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know,' (adds he) 'that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.'" 1 John iii. 15.

In addition to the above, we have the following from the Rev. J. L. Gilbert. "Where does Mr. Paine find that Solomon recovered from his apostacy? We challenge him to show a syllable to that effect in the Bible."*

That Solomon was pious in the earlier part of his

* Review of Mr. Paine's Sermon, page 25.

reign, is not questioned, but it is contended that he fell from grace and did not recover. These then are the points we have to refute.

We have already shown, that it is not easy to determine how far a man may fall into sin without falling from grace, and that if the doctrine contended for be sustained, viz. that a righteous man who sins shall die in his sins, Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Fisk, the General Conference, &c., are fallen beyond recovery. It is true, Mr. Gilbert says, "that David and Peter recovered from their backslidings, and in their recovery we have an infallible pledge that any other backsliding child of God may recover."* But it is true also, that this is directly against the doctrine as it is again and again laid down by the founder of Methodism and the General Conference. We have seen also, that eminent piety may exist in connection with practices under particular circumstances, whereas, it could not exist in connection with these practices, if the circumstances were as they are with us, and hence that we are not to judge the saints of the Old Testament as we would judge ourselves. Now these considerations weigh powerfully in the case before us.

Again: although Solomon fell into great and numerous sins, God in permitting them, seems to have intended to teach all future ages how vain it is to expect any real good from anything short of himself: hence he selected the most favoured of the sons of men for the experiment. "For what can the man do that cometh after the king?" Eccl. ii. 12. "I, the preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven." "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." "I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come

* Review of Mr. Paine's Sermon, page 25.

to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all that have been before me in Jerusalem." "I said, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure, and behold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it? I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life,"—"and whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy." "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do, and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccl. i. ii. That he did not totally apostatize, appears,

1. From the reserve expressed, 1 Kings xi. 4—6. "His heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." "And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father." Now this was spoken of him in reference to the time of his greatest wickedness.

2. From what is said in reference to all the pious, "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down." "Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."

It is true that Solomon did seek to kill Jeroboam, but it is true also, that it was because Jeroboam had "lifted up his hand against him." 1 Kings xi. 26. Unless, therefore, it would be wrong for the civil authority to quell treason with the death of the traitor, it was not wrong for king Solomon to seek to kill Jeroboam.

But it is said, that the sins that have been mentioned are "some of the last accounts we have of Solomon's life." It is to be borne in mind, however, that events recorded in the Scriptures, are not always recorded in chronological order. There is not the slightest evi-

dence therefore, that these acts were among the last acts of his life. Indeed, the book of Ecclesiastes is at war with that supposition.

That he was a pious man when he wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes, in which he confessed the sins of which it is said he did not repent, there can be no doubt. And that he did this late in life, there is abundant evidence in the book. Take this in connection with what is said of the sacred writers generally, viz. that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21, and we think, notwithstanding the "challenge" of Mr. Gilbert, there is evidence that he died a pious man.

The case of Judas Iscariot stands next on the docket. In reference to him we have the following in the "Compendium of Methodism, pp. 277, 278," viz.

"To believe that Christ called a devil to the Apostleship, and flattered him with so many endearing titles, and other intimations of his entire confidence as he did, exceeds our credulity. If he was a hypocrite, the Saviour knew it at the time he called him. But he treated him as a real friend, promoted and caressed him as a disciple indeed." "In view" (then) "of the facts that Judas was appointed to the highest office in the church, and clothed with power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease, and sent forth to preach the kingdom of heaven, raise the dead, and cast out devils, and to be hated of all men, with the promise, if he should 'endure to the end,' he should be saved, and the encouragement that the 'hairs of his head were all numbered,' and treated in other respects by the Saviour as his 'own familiar friend,' till just before the betrayal—in view of these facts, we are constrained to believe that Judas was at first, and for the most of the time, a sincere Christian. There was no encouragement to be a hypocrite at that age. It cost too much. Those who would be Christians were required

to take up their cross and follow Christ, forsaking father and mother and all else. None were received on any other terms."

To this we reply, that human reasoning, though very plausible, is often wonderfully at variance with facts, and when it is so, it must be fallacious. We will now see whether this is not so in the case before us.

In John vi. 70, 71, Christ said to his disciples, and the connection shows that it was in the early part of his ministry, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve." Again, the Apostle John speaking of Judas, "six days before the passover," soon after which our Saviour was betrayed, says, "he was a thief," "cared not for the poor," &c. Again, just before the betrayal, and immediately after our Saviour had washed his disciples' feet, he said, "Ye are clean, but not all," and John adds, "for he knew who should betray him, therefore said he, Ye are not all clean." John xiii. 10, 11.

Here then, we learn that Christ continued one in the sacred office, from about the beginning of his (Christ's) ministry, till the close; whom he knew to be "a devil," "a thief," and an unclean person. Whether, then we ask, was it worse to call such a man to the Apostleship, or to continue him in the Apostleship after his character was discovered?

Again, in the 22d Psalm, the 53d chapter of Isaiah, and in Daniel ix. 26, the crucifixion of Christ is expressly foretold. David also, personating Christ, says, Psalm xli. 9, "Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." See also Acts i. 16. Our Saviour, referring to these passages, says, Matt. xxvi. 23, 24, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him: but wo unto that man

by whom the Son of man is betrayed," &c. Now, as "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. ii. 3, so that he "knoweth all things," John xxi. 16, he must have known that Judas would betray him, when he called him to the ministry. Accordingly we are told, John vi. 64, not only that Judas "believed not," but that Christ "knew it from the beginning." Whatever may be the reasoning therefore which would make it improbable that our Saviour would knowingly call an "unbeliever," "a devil," "a thief," an "unclean" person, and a traitor, to be an Apostle, the facts are clear that he did call him. And though we might offer important considerations why he called him, we do not desire to be heard about a matter in reference to which the Scriptures are silent.

But there is still another text, so often brought up, in reference to Judas, that it may be well to notice it also.

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." John xvii. 12. That the passage does not imply that Judas was a Christian is evident, 1. from the fact that he is called "the son of perdition;" 2. from other texts in which the same form of expression occurs. Thus, in Luke iv. 25, we are told, that "many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land, but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." That "many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." And that "there shall in no wise enter into it" (the heavenly Jerusalem) "anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but

they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Rev. xxi. 27

Now in each of these texts, the latter clause is not an exception to what is asserted in the former, but asserts a different fact. The following is plainly the meaning, viz. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, &c., but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life," shall enter in. "Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias—but unto none of them was he sent, but he was sent unto Sarepta a city of Sidon, to a woman that was a widow." "Many lepers were in Israel, &c., and none of them was cleansed, but Naaman the Syrian was cleansed." And so in the text under consideration. "Those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost; but the son of perdition" is lost.

That this is its meaning is evident, from the language of our Saviour in the 9th verse of the next chapter. To those who came to take him, he said, "If ye seek me, let these (my disciples) go their way, that the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none." John xviii. 9. Although, then, Judas Iscariot did fall from the Apostleship, Acts i. 25, nothing can be more evident that he did not fall from grace. But, notwithstanding, he is called "the son of perdition," and "went to his own place," Acts i. 15, and it is said that, "good would it have been for him if he had never been born," Dr. Clarke enters into a laboured argument to show not only, that he did not hang himself, but that he was recovered from his apostasy, and is probably now in heaven. Of course, then, he has been there more than eighteen hundred years in a state of most awful distress, that "he ever was born." Should any of my readers be suffering from mental depression, and desire to have his risibles roused, let him read Dr. Clarke's comments on Acts i. 18, in which he undertakes to account for the death of Judas.

Not only does the writer guaranty a most hearty laugh, but also that he will be ready to say, Dr. Clarke, "thou art beside thyself, much learning hath made thee mad." Acts xxvi. 24.

The only remaining example of falling from grace that is adduced, so far as we know, is that of the Apostle Peter. In the Compendium of Methodism, pp. 277, 278, we meet the following:

"It is said Judas never was a Christian . . . but Peter, though he lied outright, cursed and swore, publicly denying his master, was a Christian, even in the midst of his crimes, because he afterwards repented." "Thus in trying to sustain this dangerous notion, Calvinists implicate the honesty of him in whom there was no guile; and holding Peter a Christian, while he displayed such incontestable marks of a sinner, they leave us in utter confusion, as to who are Christians and who are not."

That the best of men may, under sudden and powerful temptation, strikingly exhibit human weakness, cannot be denied. It is not usual, however, to consider this as decided evidence of their being destitute of principle, unless they deliberately persist in the sin. After the arrest of our Saviour, and "the disciples all forsook him and fled," Matt. xxvi. 56, Peter, through great love to his master, seems to have turned back, "followed him afar off, and went unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat down with the servants to see the end." Matt. xxvi. 58. Having seen his master arrested, "spit" upon, "buffeted" and "smitten" amid an enraged multitude, Matt. xxvi. 67, the great and sudden fear lest he should share the same fate, was a powerful temptation to do as he did, when accused with being in league with the man under arrest. Up to the very time that he uttered the unfortunate language, there is not only no evidence, but it is not even pretended that he had fallen from grace. Judging from the narrative, we

can hardly suppose the period, from the time of the first denial till "he went out and wept bitterly," could have been more than an hour.* Surely, then, it is to lay aside all "charity," and to think all "evil," to conclude that the heart of a friend was changed from love to enmity, merely from the fact that under the powerful temptation of fear under most alarming circumstances, that friend profanely denied the man he loved, and continued in the denial for a single hour only. How Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Fisk, the General Conference, &c., will fare under such a rule, it is, perhaps, not for us to determine. Peter fell and recovered in an hour, but they are not recovered yet.

2. That Peter did not fall from grace, is evident from the language of our Saviour. Luke xxii. 32. "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." "Satan hath desired," &c., "but I have prayed," &c. Surely, this is enough. Bishop Morris, of Ohio, says, "If Peter had died before he repented, he would have gone to hell," and we might say, "if the skies should come down, we would, &c., &c."

All that has been said, however, is met by the testimony of experience. "Many have been known to give just this evidence, all that any one could reasonably ask for himself or his brethren, and after a term of years, by a change of circumstances, they have been led astray, one step after another, until they not only lost the spirit, but the form of religion, and became its deadly enemies, and died relentless. They bore the first fruits of piety, in public and private—they enjoyed the assurance in themselves, that they were born again, and clearly evinced the same to others; and even after their decline, looking back upon their

* See Matt. xxvi. throughout, but especially verses 69—75.

experience, they believed and confessed they were converted. Is all this to pass for nothing?*

To this, we reply, that according to our Saviour, this evidence will be adduced in the day of judgment. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?" (like Balaam and Saul,) "and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works," (that is, wrought miracles, like Judas.) But how will their plea be met? "Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. vii. 22, 23. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine," John x. 14—but "I never knew you."

Having shown that the final perseverance of the saints is a doctrine of the Methodist Church, and that falling from grace is an unscriptural doctrine of the same Church, we come to notice the objections urged by that denomination against the former of these doctrines. And

1. It is objected that this "doctrine is without warrant from the word of God," . . . that "no passage (of Scripture) clearly teaches it; none necessarily infers it; no principle of revelation sanctions it;" and that "if it could be true, its truth never can be derived from the Bible."†

The reader will not be at all surprised at the assertion, that a doctrine distinctly taught by standard writers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, is not taught in the Bible. That is one of their inconsistencies.

To the assertion that this doctrine is "without warrant from the word of God, no passage clearly teaches it; none necessarily infers it," &c., another should have been added, "namely, after the word of God shall have passed through the Arminian crucible."

* Compendium of Methodism, pp. 276, 277.
† Objections to Calvinism, p. 179.

With this brief notice of this first objection, we proceed to a second, viz. "If the doctrine be true, a man after conversion is no longer a free agent. In this, as in all respects with the fate and absurdity of the system, he is brought under a necessity which he has no power to avoid. He cannot fall away from salvation," &c.*

In reply to this, we will first hear Mr. Wesley. "With regard to final perseverance, I am inclined to believe there is a state attainable in this life from which a man cannot finally fall."†

Does any one believe Mr. Wesley intended to convey the idea, that he who attains a state from which he cannot finally fall, has, by making that attainment, lost his free agency?‡

2. Let us hear Mr. Watson. "Imperfection must in comparison of God, and the creature's own capacity of improvement, remain the character of a finite being; but it is not so clear that this imperfection must, at all times, and through the whole course of existence imply liability to sin. God is free, and yet he cannot be tempted of evil." "It is impossible for him to lie, not for want of natural freedom, but because of an absolute moral perfection. Liberty and impeccability imply therefore no contradiction."§

3. Let us hear the Apostle Paul. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. v. 10.

Now if there is no interference with moral liberty in reconciling enemies to God, does it follow that the grace which keeps them in a state of reconciliation, is so much greater than that which reconciled them, that "a man after conversion is no longer a free agent?"

* Objections to Calvinism, page 196.
† Works, Vol. III. page 289.
‡ See his Sermon on "Divine Providence," Sec. 15.
§ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. vi.

So thought not Paul. The Arminian, therefore, must give up his Wesley, his Watson, the Apostle Paul, &c., or give up his objection. His great error is, in supposing that one who loves God supremely, (as every Christian must,) may desire to fall from that state of love; and that unless he is permitted to do so, he will be deprived of his liberty. Whereas such an alienation of heart, implies the absence of all love. Although then, such a man may, in the exercise of free agency, fall into sin, he cannot fall from grace.

This is perhaps the most artful objection ever brought against the doctrine, as it leads directly to an inquiry concerning the mode of the divine operation on the human heart—a subject on which, while in this world, we must remain profoundly ignorant. But where reason fails, revelation shines with peculiar brightness. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty and dominion and power." Jude 24.

Here it is expressly declared, that the Lord "is able to keep his people from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory." To those therefore who urge the above objection, we reply, "ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God." See also Rom. xiv. 4. But

3. "If this doctrine is true, it is no difference what a man does after conversion; he cannot peril his soul—cannot even render his salvation doubtful. Thus it inculcates recklessness and licenses crime." Then, after charging upon the Calvinist the "pre-irresistible regeneration" of the Methodist Church, the objector continues: "The man cannot avoid being regenerated, and then being regenerated, he may become during life, a devil in sin, but he cannot miss heaven. Now, what sheer licentiousness is here! what more is requisite to induce unlimited and incurable reckless-

ness? The man is in no danger; it is all one, let him indulge to the utmost excess; he is safe, and cannot be less so. Is this Christianity? Is this iniquitous teaching to be palmed upon the world as God's truth?"*

By a saint, we understand one whose heart has been changed from a state of "enmity against God" (Rom. viii. 7) to love. So that he who was an enemy, has been "reconciled to God by the death of his Son," (Rom. v. 10,) and loves God supremely. By the perseverance of a saint, we understand, a continuance in that state of reconciliation. And yet we are told that if this "is true, it is no difference what a man does after conversion." He who is possessed of such a principle as the objector supposes, has never been "born again." Some children obey their parents through fear, others through love. The latter are afraid to offend them, because they love them. The former is a slave, the latter is a child. He then who does not endeavour to lead a life of holiness is not a child of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God." As to the charge, that the idea of continuing in a state of reconciliation with, and love to God "inculcates recklessness, and licenses crime," it is necessary to state the charge only, to show its absurdity. Are those who embrace it persons of less truth, less honesty, less moral virtue than those who deny it? In the discharge of their duties to God and man are they notoriously deficient? In their attention to personal piety and family religion, are they inferior to others? Have they less reverence for the Bible, less regard for the institutions of God? In those churches and neighbourhoods where this doctrine is most generally believed, is it a fact that less is done to give the Bible to every individual, and family, and nation under heaven? The

* Objections to Calvinism, page 197.

reverse of all this is true. We will pass on therefore to another objection, viz. "If the doctrine of the final perseverance be true, then sin is not so abhorrent in a Christian as it is in a sinner, and is not attended with the same consequences. The sins into which a believer may fall, are accounted sufficient to damn a sinner, but are not sufficient to make a whit uncertain the salvation of the believer, if committed by him."*

We have already shown that a man may be a Christian without being absolutely free from sin—that if this be not so, there is no salvation for Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Fisk, the General Conference, &c. While then an impenitent sinner in sinning adds to his sins, a penitent believer is sure to repent of his sins. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down." It is true, therefore, that "sin in a Christian is not attended with the same consequences, as it is in a sinner," &c.

A fifth objection is, that if the doctrine be true, then, "all the exhortations, cautions, and warnings recorded in the Scriptures, are false colours and deceptive motives. They are like the attempts of some weak parents, who undertake to frighten their children into obedience by superstitious tales and groundless fears. God knows when he is giving out these intimations of danger that there is no danger," &c.†

It is admitted on all hands, that exhortations, cautions and warnings are addressed to believers. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." "What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him," &c. Now, Calvinists contend that such exhortations, cautions, warnings, &c., so far from being inconsistent with the certainty of a

* Objections to Calvinism, page 197.
† Calvinistic Controversy, page 34.

believer's salvation, are a necessary part of that system of means by which the people of God are "kept through faith unto salvation." Thus "when Christ was born in Bethlehem in the days of Herod, it was absolutely certain that he should not be slain for more than thirty-three years; for Daniel, above five hundred years before, had pointed to the precise time, when Messiah should be cut off. It was absolutely certain he should live to perform the miracles which he did, on the sick, the blind, and the lame; and that at his death he should be numbered with the transgressors, and then be buried with the rich man of Arimathea; for Isaiah had predicted these things seven hundred years before. It was absolutely certain that at his crucifixion they should give him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall, and that the soldiers should part his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture, for the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, had spoken of this above a thousand years before. Yet when Christ was born, and Herod was troubled, and sought to slay him, an angel of the Lord came to Joseph, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." Matt. ii. 13. Had Joseph been of the opinion that when an event is rendered certain by the purpose of God, the means necessary to bring it about may be dispensed with, he would most likely have replied, "Thou angel of the Lord! I do not see the necessity of going into Egypt. If what David and Isaiah and Daniel have said, be true, Messiah will not be cut off by Herod. He has yet to live many years, and perform many marvellous works, and then die in a manner quite different from what Herod designs. This journey is therefore altogether useless. Your warning" is like the attempt of some weak parent who undertakes to frighten his child into obedience by superstitious tales and groundless fears. You know, when giving

out these intimations of danger, that there is no danger." Joseph's creed was more orthodox. He considered the purposes and promises of God as perfectly consistent with his commands, and the duties he requires of us. "He arose and took the young child and his mother, and went into Egypt." Herod spent his rage. Christ was not slain. He lived till the time Daniel had mentioned—performed the works the prophets had foretold, and was put to death as had been predicted.

Now in this case, the event was certain, and yet the warning given was neither absurd nor useless. It had its intended effect, and in due time all was fulfilled.

In like manner, the exhortations, cautions and warnings addressed to believers, are not designed to shake their confidence in the "exceeding great and precious promises of God, or to persuade them that it is not safe to put entire trust in his word, but to teach them the way in which they should walk, and keep them from the evil that is in the world, and fit them for the heavenly kingdom."* But

6. "Has a man already tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come? Being justified by faith, hath he peace with God? Then sin hath no more dominion over him. But by and by, considering he may fall foully indeed, but cannot fall finally, he is not so jealous over himself as he was at first. He grows a little and little slacker, till ere long he falls again into the sin from which he was clean escaped. As soon as you perceive he is entangled again and overcome, you apply the Scriptures relating to that state. You conjure him not to harden his heart any more, lest his last state be worse than the

* The above reply, with some additions and omissions, is taken from a sermon on the "Saints' Perseverance," by the Rev. James Gallaher.

first. 'How can that be?' says he: 'Once in grace, always in grace; and I am sure I was in grace once. You shall never tear away my shield.' So he sins on, and sleeps on, till he awakes in hell."*

Here it is contended that it is a natural tendency of the doctrine to beget carelessness and slothfulness in the divine life. That there is spiritual sloth to a greater or less extent, in every branch of the Church, cannot be denied. But the question is, does the doctrine that a saint will persevere in a state of grace unto the end, or the doctrine that he may fall from grace, tend most to produce it? What is it, we ask, that more than anything else stimulates men to watchfulness and effort in every undertaking? Is it a prospect of success, or a probability of failure? What is the effect of each on the farmer, the merchant, the politician, the soldier? In short, what is the effect on men of every calling. Are they not stimulated to effort in proportion as the prospect brightens, and chilled in their zeal in proportion as the prospect darkens? A report spread among the troops of Alexander the Great, when they were about to engage in battle with a foe vastly their superior in number, that an eagle had just been seen to perch on Alexander's head, was followed by an onset of almost unparalleled impetuosity. But why was this? It was because it was considered tantamount to a declaration from heaven that they would be victorious. Now why the prospect of certainly reaching heaven should discourage us from setting out on the journey, or dampen our ardour in pursuing that journey, is to us one of the greatest of all mysteries.

But continues Mr. Wesley, (and what he says is endorsed by the General Conference,) "The observing these melancholy examples day by day, this dreadful havoc which the devil makes of souls, especially of those who have begun to run well, by means of this

* Doctrinal Tracts, p. 92.

unscriptural doctrine, constrains me to oppose it from the same principle whereon I labour to save souls from destruction."*

As no facts are given which go to sustain this general statement, and we are not aware of facts that will sustain it, let us see what has been the bearing of the doctrine that a saint may fall from grace, on the same point.

Mr. Wesley, in his sermon on "The Wisdom of God's Counsels," speaks of "thousands that once ran well," who "one after another drew back to perdition." "Early in his career, he took the trouble of inquiring into the motives of seventy-six persons who in the course of three months had withdrawn from one of his societies. The result was curious. Fourteen said they left it because their ministers would not otherwise give them the sacrament. These were chiefly dissenters. Nine because their husbands or wives were unwilling they should stay in. Twelve because their parents were unwilling. Five because their masters and mistresses would not let them come. Seven because their acquaintances persuaded them to leave it. Five because people said such bad things of the society. Nine because they would not be laughed at. Three because they would not lose the poor allowance. Three because they could not spare the time to come. Two because it was too far off. One because she was afraid of falling into fits. One because people were so rude in the street. Two because Thomas Naisbit was in the society. One because he would not turn his back on his baptism. One because the Methodists were Church of England men. And one because it was time enough to serve God yet."†

"The character of the converts is exhibited by the

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 92, 93.

† Southey's Life of Wesley, Vol. II. page 34.

account he gives of those who during the same time were expelled from the same society. They were two for cursing and swearing—two for habitual Sabbath-breaking—seventeen for drunkenness—four for retailing spirituous liquors—three for quarrelling and brawling—one for beating his wife—three for habitual lying—four for railing and evil speaking—one for idleness and laziness—twenty-nine for lightness and carelessness."*

If then, one hundred and forty-one members of one society fell from grace in three months, how many fell from all the societies under Mr. Wesley's care in twelve months, is not for us to know.

Again: Mr. Wesley, speaking of a great excitement in the school at Kingwood, during a religious service of five days, tells us that "the subjects of it were strong in the spirit, full of love, and joy, and peace in believing." Most of these were admitted to the Lord's supper for the first time the next day. Mr. Wesley inserted the whole account of it in his journal. In a letter written at the same time, he says, "God sent down a shower of grace upon the children," &c. Twelve months afterwards he makes the following entry—"I spent an hour among our children at Kingwood. It is strange! How long shall we be constrained to weave Penelope's web? What is become of the wonderful work of grace which God wrought in them last September? It is gone! It is gone! It is vanished away! There is scarce any trace of it remaining."†

And yet Arminians would have us believe that the doctrine of the saint's perseverance powerfully tends to promote sluggishness in the divine life, while the doctrine that a saint may fall from grace is a powerful incentive to diligence.

Let the reader compare the facts just given with

* Life of Wesley, Vol. II. page 34. † Ibid. page 230.

what he himself has witnessed in the Methodist Church, and he will conclude they are not done falling yet. "Between the years 1844 and 1847 they sustained a net decrease of more than fifty thousand members."* Should not "the observing these melancholy examples day by day, this dreadful havoc which the devil makes of souls by means of this unscriptural doctrine, constrain" Arminians "to oppose it on the same principle whereon" they "labour to save souls from destruction?"

We will close this chapter with two quotations. The first is from the Doctrinal Tracts, page 342.

"*Question.* May not some of those (who have the testimony, both of their justification and sanctification,) have a testimony from the Spirit that they shall not finally fall from God?

"*Answer.* They may, and this persuasion, that neither life nor death shall separate them from Him, far from being hurtful, may, in some circumstances be extremely useful. These, therefore, we should in no wise grieve, but earnestly encourage them to hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end."

Those who move in a circle, no matter what course they steer, by continuing their journey, are sure to get back to the starting point. Arminians accordingly, after laying down the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, as undoubtedly true, set out in a circle of objections, and difficulties. By continuing however, they at length cast anchor, in the port from which they started, viz. that "*far* from being hurtful, (it) may be *extremely* useful," and unite in the following stanzas:

"We have laid up our love, and our treasure above,
Though our bodies continue below:
The redeemed of the Lord, we remember his word,
And with singing to Paradise go.

* Compendium of Methodism, page 174.

With singing we praise the original grace,
By our heavenly Father bestowed,
Our being receive, from His bounty and love,
To the honour and glory of God.

For thy glory we are created to share,
Both the nature and kingdom divine:
Created again, that our souls may remain,
In time and eternity thine.

With thanks we approve, the design of thy love,
Which hath joined us in Jesus's name:
So united in heart, *that we never can part*,
Till we meet at the feast of the Lamb."*

CHAPTER XVII.

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

In this chapter we take up that fundamental doctrine of Christianity, "Justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ." This was the great weapon of the Reformation. This Luther said, "is the article of a standing or a falling church." "O ye fools," exclaims Mr. Wesley, "when will ye understand that the preaching of justification by faith alone, the allowing of no meritorious cause of justification, but the death and righteousness of Christ, and no conditional or instrumental cause but faith, is overturning Popery from the foundation?"†

That the reader may see how fully and unequivocally this Calvinistic doctrine is taught in the Methodist Church, I will first quote it as it is taught in the Presbyterian Church. In their Shorter Catechism, in answer to the question, "What is justification?" we have the following answer, viz. "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our

* Hymn 412, Methodist Hymn Book.
† Southey's Life of Wesley, Vol. I. p. 141.

sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone." Now for the Methodists.

The Rev. James Arminius, says, "I believe in my heart, and confess with my mouth, that I shall pass as a righteous man before God, only by faith in Jesus Christ: so that, though my conscience may accuse me, not only of having grievously sinned against all the commands of God, but also, of not having observed one of them, and of being likewise inclined to all evil; yet provided I embrace these benefits with real confidence of heart, the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ, will be imputed to me and bestowed upon me, without any merit of my own, and purely from the mercy of God: exactly as though I had never committed any sin, and as if no stain or taint had adhered to me. Nay, more than this, as though I had perfectly performed that obedience which Christ has performed for me: not because I can please God by the dignity of my faith, but because the sole satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, are made my righteousness before God. But I am not able to embrace this righteousness, and to apply it to myself, in any other manner, than by faith."*

Again he says, "I am not conscious to myself, of having taught, or entertained any other sentiments concerning the justification of man before God, than those which are held unanimously by the Reformed and Protestant Churches, and which are in complete accordance with their expressed opinions.

"I believe that sinners are accounted righteous solely by the obedience of Christ; and that the righteousness of Christ is the only meritorious cause, on account of which God pardons the sins of believers,

* Life of Arminius, pp. 152, 153.

and reckons them as righteous, as if they had perfectly fulfilled the law."*

Mr. Wesley, in his sermon on Jeremiah xxiii. 6, says, "It was the least part of Christ's external righteousness, that he did nothing amiss; that he knew no outward sin of any kind, neither was guile found in his mouth; that he never spoke one improper word, nor did one improper action. Thus far it is only a negative righteousness, though such an one as never did, nor ever can belong to any one that is born of a woman, save himself alone. But even his outward righteousness is positive too. 'He did all things well.' In every word of his tongue, in every work of his hands he did precisely the 'will of him that sent him.' In the whole course of his life, he did the will of God on earth, as the angels do it in heaven. All he acted and spoke was exactly right in every circumstance. The whole and every part of his obedience was complete. He fulfilled all righteousness."

"But when is it that any of us may truly say, 'The Lord our righteousness?' In other words, when is it that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, and in what sense is it imputed?

"1. Look through all the world, and all the men therein are either believers or unbelievers. The first thing then which admits of no dispute among reasonable men, is this. To all believers the righteousness of Christ is imputed; to unbelievers it is not.

"But when is it imputed? When they believe. In that very hour the righteousness of Christ is theirs. It is imputed to every one that believes as soon as he believes. Faith and the righteousness of Christ are inseparable. For if he believes according to the Scriptures, he believes in the righteousness of Christ. There is no true faith, that is, justifying faith,

* Life of Arminius, pp. 236, 337.

which hath not the righteousness of Christ for its object.

"5. But in what sense is it that his righteousness is imputed to believers? In this, all believers are forgiven, and accepted, not for the sake of anything in them, or of anything, that ever was, that ever is, or that can be done by them, but wholly and solely for what Christ hath done and suffered for them. . . . . We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And this is not only the means of our obtaining the favour of God, but of our continuing therein. . . . And this is the doctrine I have constantly believed and taught for near eight and twenty years. This I published to all the world in 1738, and ten or twelve years since." "The hymns published a year or two after this, and since republished several times, speak full to the same purpose." "In the Sermon on Justification, published nineteen, and again seven or eight years ago, I expressed the same thing.

"But is not a believer invested or clothed with the righteousness of Christ? Undoubtedly he is. And accordingly the words above recited, are the language of every believer's heart:

> "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
> My beauty are, my glorious dress."

"That is, for the sake of thy active and passive righteousness, I am forgiven and accepted of God." "The righteousness of Christ is the whole and sole foundation of all our hope." "I therefore no more deny it, than I deny the Godhead of Christ. A man may full as justly charge me with denying the one as the other. Neither do I deny imputed righteousness; this is another unkind and unjust accusation. I always did, and do still, continually affirm, that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to every believer. But who deny it? Why all infidels, whether baptized

or unbaptized: all who affirm the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to be a cunningly devised fable. All Socinians and Arians; all who deny the supreme Godhead of the Lord that bought them. They of consequence deny his divine righteousness, as they suppose him to be a mere creature. And they deny his human righteousness as imputed to any man, seeing they believe every one is accepted for his own righteousness. The human righteousness of Christ, at least the imputation of it, as the whole and sole meritorious cause of the justification of a sinner before God, is likewise denied by the members of the Church of Rome," &c. "But blessed be God, we are not among those who are so dark in their conceptions and expressions. We no more deny the phrase than the thing."

It is not possible for language to announce more unequivocally and clearly the Calvinistic doctrine of imputed righteousness. It is true, the Rev. R. Watson says: "This sermon, (from which the above is quoted,) "is one of peace; one in which he shows how near he was willing to approach those who held the doctrine of Calvin on this subject."*

Again, he says: "Mr. Wesley's sermon on Imputed Righteousness, is an instance of his anxiety to approach his Calvinistic brethren in his modes of expression, as far as possible," &c.†

From this it is evident, Mr. Watson would have us believe Mr. Wesley had, in this instance, stretched his belief. But although there is abundant evidence in the quotations themselves, that Mr. Watson is mistaken, Mr. Wesley settles the question himself. Thus when "he stated his doctrinal views in perhaps as clear a manner, though in a summary form as at any period subsequently," he said: "I believe neither our

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.
† Watson's Life of Wesley, page 211.

own holiness or goods works are any part of the cause of our justification; but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it; or that for the sake of which, on account of which, we are justified before God."*

The Rev. R. Watson shall be our third witness. "The righteousness of Christ," says he, "denotes not only his absolute perfection, but is taken for his perfect obedience unto death, and his suffering the penalty of the law in our stead."† "The imputation of Christ's righteousness is held by such (viz. higher) Calvinists in a proper sense."‡

Again, after stating what he considers Calvin's idea of the subject, he says: "All this we grant is capable of being interpreted to a good and scriptural sense," &c.§

Although we might greatly multiply our authorities, the fourth and last shall be the collection of Hymns in use in the Methodist Episcopal Church at the time of the division.

Thus in hymn 26, the penitent, in an address to the Saviour, is made to say:

"Thou wilt not break a bruised reed,
Or quench the smallest spark of grace;
Till through the soul, thy power is spread,
Thy all victorious righteousness."

Again, in hymn 33:

"Where is the blessedness bestowed,
On all that hunger after thee?
I hunger now, I thirst for God;
See the poor fainting sinner, see;
And satisfy with endless peace;
And fill me with thy righteousness."

* Watson's Life of Wesley, pp. 76, 77.
† Theological Dictionary. Term, "Righteousness."
‡ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii. § Ibid.

See also in hymn 41:

"Never shall I want it less,
When thou the gift hast given;
Filled me with thy righteousness
And sealed me heir of heaven."

Also, in hymn 468:

"Jesus, the name high over all
In hell, or earth, or sky,
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly.

"His only righteousness I show,
His loving truth proclaim;
'Tis all my business here below
To cry 'behold the Lamb!' "

Again, in hymn 63:

"Cast out thy foes, and let them still,
To Jesus' name submit,
Clothe with thy righteousness, and heal
And place me at thy feet."

The connection of all these quotations shows, that whenever the word "righteousness" is used, it means the righteousness of Christ. More might be added, but this is enough to show the doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

We will next show that this teaching is in exact accordance with the Scripture.

Thus the Lord, foretelling the coming of the Messiah, said, "Seventy weeks are established to finish the transgression, and make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness," Dan. ix. 24. The prophet Jeremiah, speaking of the same subject says, "And this is the name by which he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness." If then, the coming of Christ was "the bringing in of everlasting righteousness," and he is the righteousness of his people, his righteousness must be imputed to them. That it is so, is evident from other passages. Isaiah referring

to Christ says, "In the Lord have I righteousness," Isa. xxiv. 25. But what righteousness? Not his own, for "we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," Isa. xiv. 6. Evidently then, as believers are spiritually the "members of Christ's body," Eph. v. 30, they obtain a righteousness by having his righteousness set down to them. As an arm of Washington, though diseased and broken, would be honoured, on account of that body of which it was a member; so will our heavenly Father treat the members of the body of his Son. For if in the words of Malachi, "he is the Sun of righteousness," Mal. iv. 2, he must have a righteousness. And if in the words of Jeremiah, he is "the Lord our righteousness," his righteousness must be imputed to us.

Although the doctrine of imputation is objected to, (as we shall see after a while) we will here remark that in practice it is acted on all over the world. Who does not know that the iniquities of parents are imputed to their children, sometimes to the third and fourth generations? Where could the man be found, who would feel disposed to honour a son of Benedict Arnold? But where could the man be found, who, if it were possible, would not go out of his way, to honour a son of George Washington? Where is the Arminian who would not delight to show kindness to a child of Wesley? And where is the Calvinist who would not delight to show kindness to a child of Calvin? When Cæsar was at war with the Helvetians, he pardoned the leader of a revolt for the sake of a brother of the culprit, who was a gallant officer in the Roman army. When General Scott passed sentence of death on seventy traitors in Mexico, he pardoned a father guilty of the same crime, for the sake of a gallant son, who had several times planted his country's flag on the ramparts of the enemy. In such a case a pardon is more satisfactory to justice than an

execution. In such a case the stern righteousness of the law even, gives way before the righteousness of the individual.

Now this same doctrine so universal among men, is as common in the Scriptures. God would not have destroyed Sodom if there had been ten righteous persons therein, "for the ten's sake." Gen. xviii. 32. Although Solomon "did not keep God's covenant, nor his statutes, the Lord would not rend the kingdom from him, for David, his father's sake." 1 Kings xi. 12. Although a Hebrew was "an abomination to an Egyptian," Gen. xliii. 32, for the righteousness of Joseph, Jacob and his family met with peculiar favour, and peculiar honour in Egypt. Now if such things occur in the kingdoms of this world, on account of the imperfect righteousness of men, much more may they occur in the kingdom of God on account of the perfect righteousness of Christ.

But how, it may be asked, are the benefits of Christ's righteousness to be obtained? We answer, by faith—"Justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ." Although neither Jacob nor his children had any claim upon Pharaoh, they went down into Egypt relying on the righteousness of Joseph. So also must the sinner go to God for pardon and salvation, in reliance on the righteousness of Christ. For as Pharaoh showed favour to the brethren of Joseph, for Joseph's sake, since God the Father loves the Son, he will show favour to the "brethren" of his Son, for his Son's sake. And as Joseph was not ashamed to tell Pharaoh of his father and brethren, though they were despised Assyrians, since Christ, "who sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are all one," he will "not be ashamed to call them brethren," Heb. ii. 11, though they are redeemed and pardoned sinners. This whole doctrine is most beautifully and forcibly expressed in hymn 298 of the Methodist Collection.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

"Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully absolved through these I am,
From sin and fear, and guilt and shame."

But notwithstanding "sinners are accounted righteous by the obedience of Christ," and "God pardons the sins of believers and reckons them as righteous as if they had perfectly fulfilled the law;" and notwithstanding the "believer is invested or clothed with the righteousness of Christ," so that "by imputation it is his," we are told that the believer is not justified so as to be accounted righteous in the sight of God through the imputed righteousness of Christ: but that the "plain Scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins;"* that this "view is amply supported by several passages of Scripture, in which the terms pardon, forgiveness, and remission of sins, are used convertibly with the term justification;"† that "justification, pardon, and forgiveness, as they are used in the Scriptures, obviously mean one and the same thing;"‡ and that "justification in the sense of the forgiveness of sins is the only import of the terms."§

To this we reply, that as the sinner never receives pardon from God, without being justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ, the term pardon is frequently used, or referred to in the Scriptures, in connection with justification: but to say they are convertible terms, mean the same thing, and that "justification in the sense of the forgiveness of sins, is the *only* import of the term," is about as great an abuse

* Wesley's Sermon on Justification by Faith.
† Watson's Life of Wesley, page 147.
‡ Bakewell's Counsels, page 16, Chap. 23.
§ Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.

of langnage and of the Scriptures, as could well be made. The word *justify* is a legal term, the opposite of *condemn;* both of which are intended to state a fact. As for example, when it appears in evidence that a man under charge of murder, acted in necessary self-defence, he is said to be justified. When again it appears in evidence that another has been guilty of unprovoked, wilful and deliberate murder, he is condemned. Now the court in pronouncing the justification of the one, does not make him innocent, but simply states a fact, viz. that he is innocent. And in pronouncing the guilt and condemnation of the other, it does not make him guilty, but simply states a fact, viz. that he is guilty. That these terms are used in this sense in the Scriptures, will appear from a few examples. Deut. xxv. 1: "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge between them, then they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked." Here the judges are directed to declare the facts of the case, viz. that the conduct of the righteous was conformable to law, and the conduct of the wicked a violation thereof.

1 Kings viii. 31, 32: "If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house; then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous."

In the former of these cases, the judges were directed to declare, that the conduct of the righteous was conformable to law, and the conduct of the wicked in violation of it. And in the latter, the Lord was requested to do the same thing, but in neither case would the declaration change the character of those concerned.

We will next adduce a few passages in which one

or both of these terms are used. Matt. xii. 36, 37, "But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Luke vii. 29, "And all the people that heard Christ, justified God," &c. Gal. ii. 16, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." James ii. 21, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son," &c. &c.

Let us now give to "justification" the meaning contended for, and we will have the judges directed to "pardon" the righteous, and God requested to do the same. Again, we will have it stated in the Bible, that men will be pardoned in the day of judgment for words not spoken amiss—that "all the people pardoned, God," and that "Abraham was pardoned by works." And yet we are told, that "justification is a sentence of pardon;" "is the pardon of sin;" "the pardon of sin by the judicial sentence of the majesty of heaven under a gracious constitution"—that "justification in the sense of forgiveness of sins, is the only import of the term;"* that "pardon, remission, and forgiveness of sins are used convertibly with the term justification;" and that "the plain scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins." According to these divines, therefore, a man who after being condemned ten years to hard labour in a state prison, for arson, theft, or forgery, &c., on being pardoned by the governor, after he has worked out five years, is justified for his crime—that is, the pardon justifies the offence. Why, Mr. Wesley even yields the point. Thus commenting on Rom. viii. 30—"Whom he called, them he also justified;" he says, "It is generally allowed that the word 'justified,' is

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxiii.

here taken in a peculiar sense, that it means, he made them righteous."*

But again says Mr. Wesley, (and his statement is endorsed by the General Conference,) "the righteousness of Christ is an expression I do not find in the Bible."†

Here the reader will be ready to inquire, Is it possible that he who said, "there is no justifying faith which hath not the righteousness of Christ for its object;" that "the righteousness of Christ is the whole and sole foundation of all our hope," &c.; and that the Conference, who unite in an address to Christ, and sing,

> "Clothe with thy righteousness and heal,
> And place me at thy feet."
>
> "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
> My beauty are, my glorious dress," &c.

are the persons who now say, "the righteousness of Christ is an expression they do not find in the Bible?"

But let us see whether, after all, this expression or a full equivalent, is not found in the Bible. David, speaking of Christ, says prophetically, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and declare his righteousness." Ps. xxii. 30, 31.

"Shall declare his righteousness." Whose righteousness? Why the righteousness of Christ. Rom. v. 18, "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." Mr. Wesley and the General Conference commenting on this passage, say, "When St. Paul says, 'by the righteousness of one . . . the

* Sermon on Predestination. † Doctrinal Tracts, p. 205.

free gift came,' &c., does he not mean the righteousness of Christ? Undoubtedly he does. But this is not the question. We are not inquiring about what he means, but what he says."*

Here then, it is admitted, that when Paul says, "by the righteousness of one," he means "the righteousness of Christ." But they continue, "If by the righteousness of Christ we mean anything which the Scriptures do not mean, it is certain we put darkness for light. If we mean the same which the Scripture means by different expressions, why do we prefer this expression to the scriptural? Is not this correcting the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, and opposing our own to the perfect knowledge of God."†

So then, we are to have nothing but chapter and verse, and not to express Scripture teaching, in any other than Scripture language. But why do not these divines set the example, and practise what they preach? Ye who teach others, teach ye not yourselves? Ye who say, others should not use any but Scripture language, do ye use no other? For the term "righteousness of Christ," is freely used among you.

But further, the expression objected to, is a Scripture expression. Thus 2 Peter i. 1: "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

In the original it reads thus: "Through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Does the reader wish to see how Mr. Wesley and the General Conference get around this passage? He has seen how they garble the Confession of Faith, he shall now see how they garble the Scriptures also. But hear them: "The righteousness of Christ is an expression I do not find in the Bible.

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 208. † Ibid.

The righteousness of God is an expression I do find there. I believe this means first, the mercy of God, as 2 Peter 1: "Them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God."*

Here, they so break off the sentence, as to leave out the very expression which they say they "do not find in the Bible." And "is not this correcting the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, and opposing their own to the perfect wisdom of God?" How Mr. Wesley and the General Conference are to escape the charge of "handling the word of God deceitfully," 2 Cor. iv. 2, is not for us to say. If they had made the Scriptures, these "sacred oracles" would no doubt have been very different in many places. We are reminded of a man who not long since was objecting very much to some of the doctrines which he said were contained in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. On being asked if he had read that book, he gave a negative answer. It was then presented to him on condition that he would read it. Some time after, the donor met him and inquired whether he had read the book, and how he liked it? In reply he said, "he had read it; that with the large print," (meaning the Confession,) "he got along very well, but that the little print below," (meaning the Scriptures referred to in proof of the Confession,) "was the very devil." And truly, it would puzzle any one to explain how he can swallow the references, yet choke at the Confession.

But to return. Mr. Wesley and the General Conference tell us "they are the more sparing in the use of this expression, viz. the righteousness of Christ, because it has been so frequently and dreadfully abused; and because the Antinomians used it to justify the grossest abominations." And they ask,

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 205.

"doth not this way of speaking naturally tend to make Christ the minister of sin?"*

In reply to this, we say, it is admitted that when Paul speaks of the "righteousness of one," he means the righteousness of Christ.†

2. We have shown that "the righteousness of Christ" is a Scripture expression. Since then this phrase "expresses the meaning of the Scripture, and is itself a Scripture expression, if Arminians will inform us of another that will better accord with the "wisdom of the Holy Ghost," and more conform our own knowledge "to the perfect knowledge of God," and thus be less liable to Antinomian abuse, we may consider the propriety of using it. Till then we will not hesitate to use the inspired language of the Apostle Peter, in preference to the uninspired language of Mr. Wesley, and especially since Mr. Wesley does not hesitate to use it himself.

Having disposed of what is said against the use of the phrase "the righteousness of Christ," we will notice what is said against the phrase, "the imputed righteousness of Christ." Mr. Wesley, in a letter to the Rev. James Hervey, says, "For Christ's sake, and for the sake of immortal souls which he has purchased with his blood, do not dispute for that particular phrase, the 'imputed righteousness of Christ.' It is not scriptural, it is not necessary." Again he asks, "Where is the need, where is the use of contending so strenuously, for the imputaion of his righteousness? The nice metaphysical doctrine of imputed righteousness leads not to repentance but to licentiousness."

And is this from the man who elsewhere says, "O ye fools! when will ye understand that the preaching of justification by faith alone; the allowing of no meritorious cause of justification but the death and

* Doctrinal Tracts, page 209. † Ibid. page 208.

righteousness of Christ; and no condition or instrumental cause but faith, is overturning Popery from the foundation?" Is it from the same man who says, "the righteousness of Christ is imputed to every one that believes, as soon as he believes?" that he "always did, and does still continually affirm that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to every believer?" that although "all Infidels," "all Socinians, Arians and members of the Church of Rome deny it," "we (Methodists) are not among those who are so dark in their conceptions and expressions. We no more deny the phrase than the thing." To this we can give no other reply than that the man who wrote the former, wrote the latter also.

We will next hear a statement from him, in which the General Conference unite. "We are all agreed," says he, "as to the meaning, but not as to the expression, 'the imputed righteousness of Christ,' which I still say, I dare not insist upon, neither require any one to use, because I cannot find it in the Bible." "If the very personal obedience of Christ be mine the moment I believe, can anything be added thereto? Does my obeying God add any value to the perfect obedience of Christ? On this scheme, then, are not the holy and unholy on the very same footing?"*

And are these the divines, who in arranging hymns to be sung in the churches say, in addressing the Saviour:

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully absolved through these I am,
From sin and fear, and guilt and shame."

* Doctrinal Tracts, pages, 208, 209.

To which we may add two other verses of the same hymn, as it came from Mr. Wesley, but which the General Conference have omitted, viz.

"This spotless robe the same appears,
When ruined nature sinks in years;
No age can change its glorious hue,
The robe of Christ is ever new.

O let the dead now hear thy voice,
Bid, Lord, thy banished ones rejoice;
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
Jesus the Lord our righteousness."

In reference to these stanzas, we will only say, if they do not teach that a believer is justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ, it would be difficult to find language that did. Although then, the Methodist Church objects to the doctrine in their Doctrinal Tracts, as they teach it so distinctly in their Hymn-book, the objection has no weight with themselves, and cannot be expected to have greater weight with others.

As to the charge, that both the phrase and the doctrine taught by the phrase, "lead to impenitence and licentiousness," we remark, that if, in the face of the clear and explicit statements, ("as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God," Rom. viii. 14, "and by their fruits ye shall know them,") any one supposes that by being "born of the Spirit," he imbibes a love for sin, and that for it he finds a cloak in the imputed righteousness of Christ, there is not a doctrine in the Bible he would not pervert. He who "is born of God" partakes of the holy nature of God, consequently, he must feel an aversion to sin. And although he "finds a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members," with Paul he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" That faith in Christ which does not lead to holiness

of life is a dead faith. Hence we say, with Mr. Wesley, "God implants righteousness in every one to whom he imputes it, and sanctifies as well as justifies all that believe."*

When travellers get lost, they are apt to travel in all directions, and of course, are sometimes in the right one. While a theological writer sticks to Calvinism, he steers a straight course, as has been shown; but when he leaves that, he wanders about through a dense fog, until he gets back again. Having seen the winding course of a ship when guided under an Arminian chart, it is gratifying to see it return to the point, by departing from which it began to err. Take the following from the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, the great organ of the Methodist Church North, of Feb. 9, 1854.

"*Pardon—Justification.*—Are these words synonymous? that is, do they each convey the same idea? Can they be used interchangeably without impairing correct statements of gospel truth? Do they each equally express the action of the Deity in the case of a repenting sinner?

"An answer to either of these questions would go far to relieve uncertainty as to the others; and we might, it is true, summarily dispose of the first by an appeal to the dictionaries. But are these satisfying authorities? We all know how common it is for dictionaries to expound one word by rehearsing several similar ones, and then, when we seek for the import of one or more of these similar words, we find again the same words repeated, with the addition, it may be, of the one first explained! so that all *similar* words thus appear to be synonymous, when, strictly speaking, we have no synonyms.

"But may not a single and thus more direct question be substituted for all the above, the answer to which

* Sermon on Imputed Righteousness.

will present all that is important for us to know on this subject, viz. Do the sacred penmen use these words interchangeably? I think not. At least the New Testament writers do not, for one of these words, viz. *pardon*, is not found on its pages. This is a most significant fact, only to be accounted for, it would seem, on the supposition that our translators did not find its equivalent in the Greek, and knew that the idea which it conveys would not be a correct one in the premises. What is this idea? What legitimate impression does this word make when it is used? Does it not properly convey one idea alone? If, for instance, we hear one say, 'I beg pardon,' do we not at once conceive of some wrong committed of which this phrase is at once a confession and a petition for prerogative exemption from just consequences? Again, when it is said, 'The governor has pardoned him,' do we not receive the single idea of a *sentenced* criminal remaining guilty, though released by executive prerogative from the penalty pronounced by the judge? Or, do these words convey the *twofold* idea of a liberated felon at once released from both the *penalty* and *guilt* of his crime, and transformed by this act of pardon into a free and justified citizen? Or, is the governor ever said to *justify* a criminal? If not, then this word *pardon* cannot be used interchangeably with the gospel term '*justification.*' It would not be a correct one in the premises, and hence is not used at all in the New Testament, either by its inspired writers or by our translators.

"How, then, has this word obtained such universal currency among orthodox Christians—a currency which has substituted it in popular use to the almost entire exclusion of the other, when this other is so frequently used by our Lord and his apostles? Why, why is this? Can it be thought that this commonplace term is so much better than our nervous old Anglo-Saxon word 'forgiveness,' or the equally strong

ones derived from the Latin, 'remission' and 'justification?' Good taste forbid! But the objection is not only, or even mainly, to the bad taste of this substitution. There are other and far stronger objections. Have we, for instance, *the right* thus to substitute a word so utterly unscriptural, that it is not to be found in the New Testament, for those by which the Holy Ghost has seen fit to express his truth—especially in view of that solemn injunction, 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God?' Again: Glaring as seems this impropriety, it becomes not only objectionable, but sinfully dangerous when this word, thus unjustifiably substituted brings with it such a modification of gospel truth, as amounts to a popular perversion of the very doctrine of justification by faith, with all its associated blessings!

"If, as we have seen above, 'pardon' is an absolute prerogative act by which the executive power authoritatively exempts a sentenced criminal (by arresting the exection of the law) from the penalty which it has pronounced, and without even pretending to *justify* him, the *sinner*, in this case, so far from being justified by faith, *is not justified at all!* and of course cannot 'have peace with God,' 'access to him,' nor any consistent rejoicing 'in hope of his glory.' In mercy's name let us return to '*the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*'

"And, again, this doctrine of '*pardon*' involves us in a most ridiculous absurdity; for if it is descriptive of a prerogative act, which, in the given case, frees the guilty by simply arresting the execution of sentence, the sentence, of course, must be pronounced before it can be arrested; and shall we, who so strongly contend that this is a state of probation—that 'sentence is not executed against an evil work,' —that even the judgment itself is suspended until all earthly acts, and actors, and their earthly consequences shall be arrested by the end of earth—com-

mit the egregious folly of stultifying our own teachings, by substituting for the plain words of Christ and his Apostles a word which is not only never used by them, but which exhibits the gross absurdity of representing the Almighty as pardoning the sinner not only before sentence, but even in advance of trial, yea, even before the court is in session, before which alone he can be tried—in fact, before he is arrested or even indicted, and that, too, in the very teeth of the public proclamation of the Judge himself, even our Lord Jesus Christ, that 'the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son?' And shall we commit this absurd folly? We! Forbid it common-sense!

"But does not the Bible say, 'The sinner is condemned already?' No, no! the Bible uses no such word. Christ, indeed, said to Nicodemus, 'He that *believeth not* is condemned already;' but he prefaced it by declaring, 'He that believeth *is not* condemned;' and of neither did he say he was *sentenced*, so that neither was properly a subject of pardon: and even if he had said that the entire race were both condemned and sentenced, a general act of executive *pardon* would not, could not *justify them;* and 'justification by faith' is the doctrine of the gospel, and not *pardon* by prerogative, nor yet *pardon* on condition of faith. But, again, the question is not about the state of either the unbeliever or the guilty sinner—far less about a sentenced one—but about a *justified* believer; one whose 'faith is *counted* to him for righteousness,' as a full equivalent, supplying the lack in all previous omission; one who, while his faith is thus counted *to him*, has his sins *taken away from him*—borne 'into the land of forgetfulness'—by the Lamb of God, 'who was manifested to *take away* our sins.' For whether the words rendered, 'take away,' 'forgiveness,' or 'omission,' be *αἴρω*, *ἀφίημι*, *ἄφεσις*, or *πάρεσις*, the idea is always 'dissociation, separation,

removal;' so that believers in Christ Jesus stand before God and his universe, not as pardoned felons, *guilty, though released*, but as *guiltless sinners!* whose sins are 'removed from them as far as the east is from the west,' and who may exclaim in triumph with Paul, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' Christ hath died, and God hath justified us, and 'there is therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus;' for they that believe are *justified* from all things.

"And shall we—what! all of us, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, the sons of Luther, Calvin, Knox, and Wesley—who battled the world, the devil, and the pope, in arms for that watchword of the gospel and the Reformation—'justification by faith'—quietly suffer them to steal from us what they could not force away by fire, and steel, and cord, and slily to slip into our Church-language from both tongue and pen this flippant French phrase, which, so far from containing the true idea of satisfaction for sin, and deliverance from it, which the other—the gospel word alone—so fully embodies, actually conveys *no idea* of an atonement, but simply represents a prerogative act of executive power, which may or may not be unjust in its exercise, capricious in its motives, unworthy in its subjects, and but *negative* at best in its benefits, as it merely arrests the execution of a sentence, without restoring to the guilty (whom it only frees from punishment) either the esteem or social privileges of society? Forbid it, respect for the martyrs of the Reformation.

"Is *this* the position of a child of God? Is *this* his standing among 'an innumerable company of angels' in 'the general assembly and Church of the first-born, and the spirits of just men made perfect,' to whom Paul declares the believer has already come? Is this pardoned, yet still guilty felon, with all his sins attached, because unjustified, 'a fellow citizen

with the saints?' O, how this word felon lowers the child of God—this joint heir with Christ, by robbing him of this precious benefit of his vicarious death!

"This word *pardon* may indeed satisfy the entire genus of Unitarians; nay, it is the very word of words for the Universalist, whose entire system is at open war with the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction for sin—without which the concomitant doctrine of justification by faith is absurd. But for us to use it in the place of either 'remission,' 'forgiveness,' or 'justification,' is at once a falsification of Scripture language and a perversion of gospel truth—at once the giving up without a challenge—without even a conceivable motive, of all that St. Paul has so earnestly contended for in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and leaving these mistaken ones, without warning them against this fallacy, to conceive of, and trust in a hope engendered by the use of a word of which the gospel is alike ignorant and devoid. When, on the contrary, as the gospel idea of 'justification by faith' is absolutely dependent on full satisfaction being rendered on behalf of the party so justified—we might, by an unvarying and unmodified declaration of this doctrine lead them to true 'repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,' confidently assuring them that God will thus '*for*-give' (that is, *not* give) 'them their *sins*'—but the '*re-mission*' (that is, the sending away) 'of their sins'—'*justifying* them freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the *remission* of sins that are past.' J. W.

Rockaway."

CHAPTER XVIII

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION, ETC.

In the present chapter we will notice briefly, the various degrees of holiness, to which, according to Arminians, a believer may attain in the present life. We say "*various*" *degrees*. For although each degree is laid down as undoubtedly true, and three of them, as each, exclusively true, they are so numerous, that taken together, they will be found to make a four-sided figure.

The first attainment contended for, is, entire freedom from actual sin. This, it is argued, must necessarily, and at once, be attained by all Christians.

Thus say Mr. Wesley and the General Conference, "In conformity both to the doctrine of St. John, and the whole tenor of the New Testament, we fix this conclusion—a Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin. This is the glorious privilege of every Christian; yea, though he be but a babe. But it is only of grown Christians it can be affirmed, they are in such a sense perfect as to be freed from evil desires."*

If then, "Christians, even babes in Christ are so far perfect as not to commit sin," he who sins, is not a Christian. Accordingly, "all wilful sin was held," by the first Annual Conference in England, "to imply a casting away of vital faith, and thereby to bring a man under wrath and condemnation," so that "it is not possible for him to have justifying faith again without previously repenting."† "All who married unbelievers were to be expelled from (the) society."‡

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 294, 296.

† Watson's Life of Wesley, page 148.

‡ Ibid. page 174.

It was "expected of all who continued therein, that they should evidence their desire of salvation ('from their sins') by avoiding evil of every kind, and among the evils named, was 'the putting on of gold, or costly apparel.' "* "The assistants were to give no band-ticket to any man or woman, who did not promise to leave off needless ornaments, drams, snuff and tobacco."† "Helpers" were required at their induction into office to answer in the negative the question, "Do you take snuff, tobacco, drams?"‡ The General Conference in this country, also urge "all who are aiming at Christian perfection to resolve that none of their happiness shall consist in eating and drinking, or in any of the pleasures of sense."§ And "to guard those who are saved from sin, from every occasion of stumbling," they urge them to "admit no desire of pleasing food, or any other pleasure of sense: no desire of pleasing the eye or the imagination, by anything grand, or new, or beautiful: no desire of money, of praise, or esteem; of happiness in any creature."‖ Mr. Wesley lays it down as certain, that "a man cannot have any religion who does to others what he would not they should do to him, if he were in the same circumstances."¶

The General Conference also, in the "Directions given to the Band Societies," say, "You are supposed to have the faith that overcometh the world.—To you, therefore, it is not grievous,

"5. To wear no needless ornaments, such as rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace or ruffles."**

Again, we have the following rule in reference to dress:

"*Question.* Should we insist on the rules concerning dress?

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 100.
† Ibid. page 204.
‡ Ibid. page 207.
§ Christian's Manual, page 132.
‖ Doctrinal Tracts, p. 358.
¶ Sermon on "The Way to the Kingdom."
** Discipline, Sec. iii.

"*Answer.* By all means. This is no time to give any encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore give no tickets to any, till they have left off superfluous ornaments. In order to this, 1. Let every one who has the charge of a circuit, read the thoughts upon dress, at least once a year, in every large society. 2. In visiting the classes, be very mild, but very strict. 3. Allow of no exempt cases; better one suffer than many. 4. Give no tickets to any that wear high heads, enormous bonnets, ruffles, or rings."*

In reference to "Marriage," the General Conference says:

"*Question.* 1. Do we observe any evil which has prevailed in our Church with respect to marriage?

"*Answer.* Many of our members have married with unawakened persons. This has produced bad effects. They have been either hindered for life, or have turned back to perdition.

"*Q.* 2. What can be done to discourage this?

"*A.* 1. Let every preacher publicly enforce the Apostle's caution, 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.' 2 Cor. vi. 14.

"2. Let him declare, whosoever does this will be put back on trial for six months."

"We do not prohibit our people from marrying persons who are not of our Church, provided such persons have the form, and are seeking the power of godliness; but we are determined to discourage their marrying persons who do not come up to this description. Even in a doubtful case, the member shall be put back on trial."† In the edition of the Discipline just before the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the penalty of being put back is not mentioned, but the prohibition is unchanged.

On all this we have several remarks to make. And,

* Discipline, Sec. iv. † Ibid. Sec. v.

1. Our Saviour taught his disciples to pray, "Forgive us our sins." Luke xi. 4. He then who "is so far perfect, as not to commit sin," has got ahead of the disciples of Christ. The publican might pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner," Luke xviii. 13, but this man can pray, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men." Luke xviii. 11.

2. If "a man cannot have any religion who does to others what he would not they should do to him, if he were in the same circumstances," what becomes of Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Fisk, and Arminian writers generally? Will it be pretended, that in misquoting, garbling, forging, misrepresenting and slandering, as we have seen, they have not violated the rule?

3. If "all wilful sin implies a casting away of vital faith," and "marrying an unbeliever," "putting on gold, or costly apparel," "using snuff or tobacco," "admitting a desire of any pleasure of sense," is a wilful sin, what becomes of half the preachers and half the members of the Methodist Church?

"In the Baltimore Methodist Conference, the other day, Rev. R. Cadden stated that two hundred preachers of that body chewed tobacco, and one hundred smoked cigars, all of them expending $6000, which he said would support two missionaries in China."*

4. If we are to "admit no desire of pleasing food," he who desires pleasant food in preference to other, simply because it is more pleasant, though not more wholesome, must, without repentance, go to hell. The same is true of the man who plants flowers with a desire to see them, or desires to see the Natural Bridge, the Falls of Niagara, &c.

5. That such instructions should have been laid down for monks and hermits, would not be surprising; but he who "admits no desire of any pleasure of sense, of pleasing the eye or the imagination, by anything grand or beautiful; no desire of money, of

* New York Observer, April 12, 1855.

praise, or esteem, or of happiness in any creature," is not fit to live, either on earth, or in heaven.* Why were grand and beautiful objects made, pleasant food, &c., and why were our senses given, but to enjoy these bounties of Providence? Does the reader say, "Well! all this, except that about drams, snuff, and tobacco, is too bad; is there no contradiction?" There is now before us a book with the title of "Methodism in Earnest," "being the history of a great revival in Great Britain, in which ten thousand professed sanctification in about six years, in connection with the labours of the Rev. James Caughey." Mr. Caughey, writing to a friend, from Canada, in July 1841, says, "As you intend to visit Quebec, you must not fail to see the Falls of Montmorency, only a few miles from the city. . . . . I know you love the grand and beautiful in nature, and I am sure you will retire from it, saying, with your friend,

"My full heart expanded, grew warm, and adored."†

Must not fail to see the Falls of Montmorency, &c. What! a Methodist urged to "see the falls of Montmorency," by the most successful promoter of entire sanctification, of modern times! and that, too, notwithstanding the General Conference, "to guard those who have attained it from every occasion of stumbling," urge them to "admit no desire of pleasing the eye by anything grand or beautiful!" Is there not an inconsistency here?

But again, we have already seen that "a Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin;" that "this is the glorious privilege of every Christian, though he be but a babe in Christ. But, that it is only of grown Christians, it can be affirmed they are in such a sense perfect, as to be free from evil desires." But

"*Quest.* When does inward sanctification begin?

* See Rev. xiv. 3, 4; xxi. 10—21; vii. 13.
† Methodism in Earnest, pp. 88, 89.

"*Ans.* In the moment a man is justified (yet sin remains in him, yea the seed of all sin, till he is sanctified throughout.) From that time a believer gradually dies to sin and grows in grace.

"*Q.* Is this ordinarily given till a little before death?

"*A.* It is not to those who expect it no sooner.

"*Q.* But may we expect it sooner?

"*A.* Why not? For although we grant (1) That the generality of believers whom we have hitherto known, were not sanctified till a little before death; (2.) That few of those to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles, were so at that time; nor he himself at the time he wrote his former Epistles; yet all this does not prove that we may not be so to-day."* "God may, with man's good leave, cut short the work, in whatever degree he pleases, and do the work of many years in a moment. He does so in many instances.†

"*Q.* How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us?

"*A.* They grant (1.) That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death. (2.) That till then, a believer daily grows in grace, and comes nearer and nearer to perfection. (3) That we ought to be continually pressing after it, and to exhort all others so to do.

"*Q.* What do we allow them?

"*A.* We grant (1.) That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not perfected in love till a little before their death. (2.) That the term *sanctified* is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified. (3.) That by this term alone, he rarely if ever means, saved from all sin. (4.) That consequently it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding

* Peck's Lecures on Perfection, page 60.

† Doctrinal Tracts, page 354.

the words, *wholly*, *entirely*, or the like. (5.) That the inspired writers almost continually speak of, or to those who were justified, but rarely of or to those who were wholly sanctified. (6.) That consequently, it behoves us to speak continually of the state of justification; but more rarely, at least, in full and explicit terms concerning entire sanctification.

"*Q.* What then is the point where we divide?

"*A.* It is this: Should we expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death?"*

Here, then, it is admitted, that believers generally, are not entirely sanctified, "until a little before their death." But, if "God may, with man's good leave, cut short the work," and sanctify all at once, it must be an enormous sin to withhold that leave. It follows, therefore, that all who are not "wholly sanctified," are enormous sinners. And this includes the Apostle Paul "at the time he wrote his former Epistles," as well as "those generally to whom he wrote," and "the generality of believers" since, including Messrs. Wesley, Watson, Dr. Fisk, the General Conference, &c. Some persons on seeing the extremely uncandid course of the Arminian writers we have alluded to, have said, "they were not perfect." This is not surprising. But that we should be told by the General Conference, not only that they were not pious, but enormous sinners, "till a little before death," is what we did not expect. Our wonderment ceases, however, when we find the Apostle Paul in the same category.

A second attainment contended for, is one in which the believer not only does not sin, but is purified from all tendency to sin. This, however, is short of Adamic perfection, inasmuch as he is still liable to make mistakes, &c., on account of unavoidable ignorance, and his unavoidable infirmities.

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 61, 62.

"A Christian," says the General Conference, "is so far perfect as not to commit sin, but it is only of grown Christians it can be said, they are so perfect as to be free from evil desires and evil tempers. Indeed, whence should they spring? Out of the heart of man? But if the heart be no longer evil, then evil desires no longer proceed out of it, 'for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.' And as they are freed from evil desires, so likewise from evil tempers. Every one of them can say with St. Paul, 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'" "He is purified from pride, for Christ was lowly in heart. He is pure from evil desire and self-will, for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father. And he is pure from anger in the common sense of the word, for Christ was meek and gentle. . . . Thus doth Jesus save his people from their sins, not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts."*

Commenting on 1 John i. 7—"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin"—they say, "It cleanseth at the present time, us living Christians from all sin. If any unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from all unrighteousness." "It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil desires and evil tempers." "They are freed from self-will, as desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God, and continually crying in their inmost soul, 'Father, thy will be done.' At all times their souls are even and calm. Their hearts are steadfast and immovable. Their peace flowing like as a river, passeth all understanding, and they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."†

Again, in answer to the question, "What is it to

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 296, 297. † Ibid. pp. 298, 299, 300.

be sanctified?" they say, "To be renewed in the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.

"*Q.* What is implied in being a perfect Christian?

"*A.* The loving God with all your heart, and mind, and soul. Deut. vi. 5.

"*Q.* Does this imply that *all* inward sin is taken away?

"*A.* Undoubtedly: or how can we be saved from all our uncleanness?"*

"It implies that we are saved from all perverseness and stubbornness of our will, and hardness of heart; from every wrong desire and sinful temper; and that we love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. In a word, this perfection consists in the absence of all sin properly so called, and in being filled with the fruits of righteousness, humility, repentance, faith, love, meekness, patience, and whatever is implied in Christian holiness."†

"Christian perfection," says Mr. Fletcher, "is a spiritual constellation made up of perfect repentance, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies, as well as for our earthly relations; and above all, perfect love for our invisible God, through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator Jesus Christ. And as this last star is always accompanied by all others, we frequently use, as St. John, the phrase, 'perfect love,' 'instead of the word *perfection;* understanding by it the pure love of God shed abroad in the hearts of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fulness of Christian dispensation."‡

"This perfection," says the Rev. Mr. Porter, "excludes, 'envy,' 'covetousness,' 'jealousy,' 'emulation,' 'wrath,' and 'consequently, all misrepresen-

* Doctrinal Tracts, p. 303. † Christian's Manual, p. 33.
‡ Peck's Lectures, page 67

tations of another's views, plans, or feelings. All tale-bearing, tattling, and slanderous insinuations. Every kind and degree of reference to others, which shall detract from their respectability, influence, or pleasure. Indeed, all expressions, actions, and surmises, that we would not have arrayed against ourselves."*

Does the reader ask, How is it possible for man in his fallen and impaired condition, to make the attainment here contended for? Mr. Wesley, the General Conference, &c., shall answer.

Thus, in answer to the question, "How is Christ the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth?" they say, "In order to understand this, you must understand what law is here spoken of. This I apprehend is, (1.) The Mosaic law, the whole Mosaic dispensation; which St. Paul continually speaks of as one, though containing three parts, the political, moral, and ceremonial. (2.) The Adamic law; that given to Adam in innocence, properly called 'the law of works.' This is in substance the same with the angelic law, being common to angels and man. It required that man should use to the glory of God, all the powers with which he was created. Now, he was created free from any defect, either in his understanding or his affections. His body was no clog to the mind; it did not hinder his apprehending all things clearly, judging truly concerning them, and reasoning justly, if he reasoned at all. Perhaps he had no need of reasoning till his corruptible body pressed down the mind, and impaired his native faculties. Perhaps till then the mind saw every truth that offered, as directly as the eye now sees the light. Consequently, this law, proportioned to his original powers, required that he should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right in every point

* Compendium of Methodism, pp. 262, 263.

whatever. He was well able to do so; and God could not but require the service he was able to pay.

"But Adam fell; and his incorruptible body became corruptible: and ever since, it is a clog to the soul, and hinders its operations. Hence at present, no child of man can at all times apprehend clearly, or judge truly. And where either the judgment or the apprehension is wrong, it is impossible to reason justly. Therefore it is as natural for a man to mistake as to breathe; and he can no more live without the one than without the other. Consequently no man is able to perform the service which the Adamic law requires. And as no man is obliged to perform it, God does not require it of any man. For Christ is the end of the Adamic as well as the Mosaic law." "Nor is any man living bound to observe the Adamic more than the Mosaic law."* "The whole law under which we now are, is fulfilled by love. Rom. xiii. 9, 10. Faith working, or animated by love, is all that God now requires of man. He has substituted love in the room of angelic perfection." "It is the end of every commandment of God. It is the point aimed at by the whole and every part of the Christian institution. The foundation is faith purifying the heart; the end love, preserving a good conscience." "The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and the loving our neighbour, every man, as ourselves, as our own souls."†

Mr. Wesley, speaking of angels, says, "Though their knowledge is limited, (for they are creatures,) though they are ignorant of innumerable things, yet they are not liable to mistake. Their knowledge is perfect in its kind. And as their affections are all constantly guided by their unerring understanding, so that all their actions are suitable thereto; so they

* "I mean, it is not the condition either of present or future salvation."

† Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 330—333.

do every moment, not their own will, but the good and acceptable will of God. Therefore it is not possible for man, whose understanding is darkened; to whom mistake is as natural as is ignorance; who cannot think at all but by the mediation of organs which are weakened and depraved like the other parts of his corruptible body; it is not possible, I say, for man always to think right, to apprehend things distinctly, and to judge truly of them. In consequence hereof, his affections, depending on his understanding, are variously disordered. And his words and actions are influenced, more or less, by the disorder both of his understanding and affections. It follows, that no man while in the body can possibly attain to angelic perfection.

"Neither can any man, while he is in a corruptible body, attain to Adamic perfection. Adam before his fall was undoubtedly as pure, as free from sin, as even the holy angels. In like manner his understanding was as clear as theirs, and his affections as regular. In virtue of this, as he always judged right, so he was able always to speak and act right. But since man rebelled against God, the case is widely different with him. He is no longer able to avoid falling into innumerable mistakes: consequently he cannot always avoid wrong affections, neither can he always think, speak, and act right. Therefore, man, in his present state, can no more attain Adamic than angelic perfection."*

Mr. Fletcher says, "With respect to the Adamic Christless law of innocence and paradisiacal perfection, we utterly renounce the doctrine of sinless perfection for three reasons. We are conceived and born in a state of sinful degeneracy, whereby that law is already virtually broken. Our mental and bodily powers are so enfeebled, that we cannot help actually

* Sermon on Perfection.

breaking that law in numberless instances, even after our full conversion. And, when once we have broken that law, it considers us transgressors for ever: nor can it any more pronounce us sinless, than the rigorous law which condemns a man to be hanged for murder can absolve the murderer, let his repentance and faith be ever so perfect.

"But Christ has so completely fulfilled our Creator's paradisiacal law of innocence, which allows neither of repentance nor of renewed obedience, that we shall not be judged by that law; but by a law adapted to our present state and circumstances—a milder law, called the law of Christ; that is, the Mediator's law, which is like himself, full of evangelical grace and truth."

"We do not doubt, but as a reasonable, loving father never requires of his child who is only ten years old, the work of one who is thirty years of age, so our Heavenly Father never expects of us in our debilitated state, the obedience of immortal Adam in paradise, or the interrupted worship of sleepless angels in heaven."*

But notwithstanding we are thus explicitly told what Christian perfection is—that the divine law has been brought down to the lapsed condition of man, and that under the law, thus lowered, he may be entirely sanctified, we will now show, according to Arminians, that a Christian is not "so far perfect as not to commit sin."

From Mr. Wesley, we have the following, viz.

"*Question.* What is Christian perfection?

"*Answer.* The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul: and that all thoughts, words and actions are governed by pure love.

* "Last Check," pp. 330, 331.

"*Q.* Do you affirm that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance and mistakes?

"*A.* I continually affirm the contrary, and always have done so.

"*Q.* But how can every thought, word, and work, be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake?

"*A.* I see no contradiction here. A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake. Indeed, I do not expect to be freed from actual mistake, till this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this to be the natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now think at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs, which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence, we cannot avoid sometimes thinking wrong, till this corruptible shall put on incorruption. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice; . . . yet when every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a sin. However, it cannot bear the rigour of God's justice, but needs atoning blood.

"*Q.* What was the judgment of all our brethren who met at Bristol in August, 1758, on this head?

"*A.* It was expressed in these words: (1.) Every one may mistake as long as he lives. (2.) A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice. (3.) Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, (4.) Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. (5.) It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'

"The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office, to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings, (as some not improperly speak,) their mistakes in

judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently, need an atonement."*

To this, we reply, "Sin is the transgression of the law," John iii. 4, and nothing else is. Christ made "his soul an offering for sin," Isa. liii. 10, and for nothing else. If, then, "the best of men, as long as they live," make such mistakes as "are transgressions of the perfect law," such as "would expose (them) to eternal damnation, were it not for the blood of the atonement," then the best of men are sinners.

We will show next, that none are sanctified entirely, according to the law of love.

Mr. Wesley and the General Conference, speaking of the Mosaic law, say, "God has established another law in its place, even the law of faith, and we are all under this law to God and to Christ. Both our Creator and Redeemer require us to observe it."

"*Q.* Is love the fulfilling of this law?

"*A.* Unquestionably it is. The whole law under which we now are, is fulfilled by love, Rom. xiii. 9, 10. Faith working or animated by love, is all that God now requires of man. He has substituted, (not sincerity, but) love in the room of angelic perfection.

"*Q.* How is love the end of the commandment? 1 Tim. i. 5.

"*A.* It is the point aimed at by the whole and every part of the Christian institution. The foundation is faith, purifying the heart; the end, love, preserving a good conscience.

"*Q.* What love is this?

"*A.* The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, and soul, and strength, and the loving our neighbour, every man, as ourselves, as our own souls." "But the best of men need Christ as their

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 309—312.

priest, their atonement, their advocate with the Father, not only as the continuance of their every blessing depends on his death and intercession, but on account of their coming short of the law of love. For every man living does so. . .

"*Q.* But if all this be consistent with Christian perfection, that perfection is not freedom from all sin, seeing 'sin is the transgression of the law;' and the perfect in love transgress the very law they are under. Besides, they need the atonement of Christ; and he is the atonement for nothing but sin. Is, then, the term of 'sinless perfection' proper?

"*A.* I do not approve of the expression."*

Here it is admitted, that the "perfect in love" transgress the law of love, in consequence of which they need the atonement of Christ, and that the term "sinless perfection" is improper. But if "the perfect in love" are not perfect in love, that term is improper also, and so are the terms, "wholly sanctified," "entirely sanctified." So, then, Arminians after all, give up "entire sanctification," if not as unattainable, as unattained, and so give up the question.

Having shown that a Christian is not so far perfect as not to commit sin, I will show that neither is he purified from a tendency to sin. It is said, as we have seen, that he is "entirely sanctified, is free from evil tempers; from anger in the common sense of the word." But Paul and Barnabas had "a contention so sharp that they departed asunder one from the other." Acts xv. 39.

Is it asked how the Arminian gets over this fact? Let us hear Dr. Peck.

"Dr. S. must give me some further light before I can conclude with any safety that this sharp contention affords any evidence that St. Paul's mind

* Doctrinal Tracts, pp. 332—336.

and affections had not been in a state of entire sanctification. I must know either that Paul had the wrong side in the quarrel, and that he took this side against good reason, or that he prosecuted the controversy in an unchristian spirit. All contention is not sin."*

Mr. Wesley says: "Would not any one think, on reading these words, that they were both equally sharp? That Paul was just as hot as Barnabas, and as much wanting in love as he? But the text says no such thing, as will be plain, if we consider first the occasion. When St. Paul proposed that they should 'again visit the brethren in every city where they had preached the word;' so far they were agreed. 'And Barnabas determined to take with him John, because he was his sister's son,' without receiving or asking Paul's advice. 'But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who had departed from them from Pamphilia,' (whether through sloth or cowardice,) 'and went not with them to the work.' And undoubtedly, he thought right; he had reason on his side. The following words are, *kai egeneto paroxusmos;* literally, 'And there was a fit of anger." It does not say in St. Paul, probably it was in Barnabas alone, who thus supplied the want of reason with passion, so that they 'parted asunder.' And Barnabas resolved to have his own way, did as his nephew had done before, departed from the work, took Mark with him, and sailed to Cyprus. But Paul went on to his work, being recommended by the brethren to the grace of God, (which Barnabas seems to have staid for.) 'And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.'

"From the whole account it does not appear that St. Paul was in any fault: that he either felt any temper, or spoke any word contrary to the law of love.

* Lectures on Perfection, pp. 397, 398.

Therefore, not being in any fault, he does not need any excuse."*

It is a very common remark, that what a man desires to believe, he is very apt to bring himself to believe. Accordingly as Mr. Wesley very earnestly desired to make it appear that Paul was entirely sanctified, he says, "*Probably* the fit of anger was in Barnabas alone;" then that "it does not appear that St. Paul felt any temper, or spoke any word contrary to the law of love; and then, that he was "not in any fault," so that what was at first probable only, in a few sentences is clear of all doubt.

With all due deference to the scholarship of Mr. Wesley, who was "sometime fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford," we think the translators of the Bible translated this passage as the sense required. The whole connection shows that Paul was "probably" about as angry as Barnabas; for it is immediately added, "they departed asunder, one from the other." Now is it probable they would do this without sharp words? If the anger was on the part of Barnabas only, is it not most likely Luke would have informed us that "he only got angry and left Paul," instead of saying "there was a fit of anger and they departed asunder." But if Paul was angry, either he was not "wholly sanctified," as it is said he was not "when he wrote his former epistles," or his heart was not purified "from anger." But admitting that Messrs. Wesley and Peck, and the General Conference get Paul over the difficulty, what becomes of Barnabas? That he indulged in sinful anger and in sinful acts, is not disputed. As then "a Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin," and any wilful sin blots religion out of the heart, either Barnabas had no religion, or he fell from grace. The latter is the Arminian view. Accordingly, Mr. Wesley supplies what was

* Sermon on Charity.

omitted by Luke, and tells us he "did as his nephew had done before, departed from the work," of which there is not a particle of evidence. All that is said, is, that "Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus." Acts xv. 39. That he relinquished the ministry, is affirmed by Mr. Wesley only. But, if he, who is "entirely sanctified, is free from anger in the common sense of the word," what becomes of Mr. Wesley? Does he not tell us that when his brother Charles began to laugh, he (Mr. Wesley) "began to be *very angry?*"* Now, as "the disciple is not above his master," we have never known a disciple of Mr. Wesley, who, in reference to anger, seemed to be otherwise than "as his master."

Having noticed two of the attainments in holiness contended for, and the inconsistencies and absurdities connected with them, we proceed to a third, viz. Adamic holiness. This, the reader will remember, has been given up as unattainable. Now, however, he will find that there is no piety short of it. Thus says the General Conference: "In the work of sanctification there is such a change wrought in all the affections and tempers of the mind, as to do away every root of bitterness, every evil propensity."†

Mr. Wesley says: "By salvation I mean, not barely according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven; but a present deliverance from sin: a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity."‡

Rev. N. L. Bangs says, "When a sinner is regenerated and justified, his depravity is not changed, nor subjugated it must be totally destroyed. In the destruction of carnality, the soul which was contaminated with sin, is washed and saved."§

The Rev. R. Watson says, "Regeneration is a con-

* Works, Vol. III. p. 183.
† Christian's Manual, p. 96.
‡ Works, Vol V. p. 96.
§ Reformer Reformed, pp. 134, 135.

comitant of justification: but the Apostles, in addressing the body of believers in the churches to whom they wrote their Epistles, set before them, both in the prayers they offer in their behalf, and in the exhortations they administer, a still higher degree of deliverance from sin, as well as a higher growth in Christian virtues." "To prove this," he quotes and comments on 1 Thess. v. 23, 2 Cor. vii. 1, and then says, "By which can only be meant our complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution—all inward depravation of heart, as well as that which, expressing itself outwardly by the indulgence of the senses, is called filthiness of the flesh."*

The Rev. Mr. Treffry says, "Perfection has a twofold character. There is a perfection of parts, and a perfection of degrees. A thing is perfect in the former sense, when it possesses all the properties or qualities which are essential to its nature, without any deficiency or redundancy. Thus a machine is perfect when it has all its parts, and these parts so admirably disposed as completely to answer the purpose for which it was formed. Thus a human body is perfect when it has all the limbs, muscles, arteries, veins, &c., that belong to the human body. And thus I conceive every Christian believer is perfect, as he is endowed with all the graces of the Spirit, and the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. . . . . In religion, indeed, the imagination cannot picture any additional virtue, nor the mind conceive of any new grace to be added to the Christian character. The feeblest saint is as perfect in this sense, as the most established Christian, and the babe as complete as the man. And I greatly question, whether the glorified spirits in heaven are more perfect than the saints upon earth."†

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xxix.

† Peck's Lectures on Christian Perfection, page 75.

Dr. Adam Clarke says: "This perfection is the restoration of man to the state of holiness from which he fell, by creating him anew in Christ Jesus, and restoring to him that image and likeness of God which he lost. A higher meaning it cannot have, a lower meaning it must not have. Many stagger at the term *perfection* in Christianity; because they think that what is implied in it, is inconsistent with a state of probation, and savours of pride and presumption. But we must take good heed how we stagger at any word of God. The whole design of God was to restore man to his image, and raise him from the ruins of the fall. In a word, to make him perfect; to blot out all his sins, purify his soul, and fill him with holiness; so that no unholy temper, evil desire, or impure affection or passion, shall either lodge or have any being within him. This, and this only, is true religion or Christian perfection. . . They who ridicule this, are scoffers at the word of God. They who deny it, deny the whole scope and design of the mission of Jesus Christ. And they who preach the opposite doctrine, are either speculative Antinomians or pleaders for Baal."*

If then "in the work of sanctification, there is such a change wrought in *all* the affections and tempers of the mind, so as to do away every root of bitterness, and every evil propensity:" if it "is the restoration of man to the state of holiness from which he fell—a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, to its original purity"—a "complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution; all inward depravation of heart, as well as that which, expressing itself outwardly, by indulgence of the senses, is called filthiness of the flesh," so that "the imagination cannot picture any additional virtue, nor the mind conceive of any new grace to be added to the Christian character," our

* Peck's Lectures on Perfection, pp. 70—72.

first parents were not more entirely free from sin, or more truly elevated.

This, it is true, is widely different from what has been already conceded, but it will be remembered that all along, what is conceded at one time, is maintained at another, and that Arminianism, like the Æolian harp, varies its tone according to the blowing of the wind.

The fifth and highest attainment contended for, is supra-angelic holiness.

Thus says Mr. Wesley, "Mankind in general, have gained by the fall of Adam a capacity of attaining more holiness and happiness on earth than it would have been possible for them to attain if Adam had not fallen." And "as the more holy we are upon earth, the more happy we must be, seeing there is an inseparable connection between holiness and happiness; . . . therefore the fall of Adam by giving us an opportunity of being far more holy," "how little reason have we to repine at the fall of our first parent, since herefrom we may derive such unspeakable advantages, both in time and in eternity."*

If then, man, who, as originally created, was but "a little lower than the angels," Heb. ii. 7, "may derive from the fall of Adam unspeakable advantages, both in time and in eternity," "having gained thereby a capacity and an opportunity of being far more holy on earth than would have been otherwise possible;" he may outstrip the angels.

The devil told our first parents, that by eating the forbidden fruit, they would make a most happy advancement. This, it is true, the Bible tells us was a lie; but it would seem that the Bible even, must give way before the illumination of Mr. Wesley, and that the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was after all, "to be desired to make us wise,

* Sermon on God's Love to Fallen Man.

and holy, and happy." Here, then, to sum up the whole, we have it contended, first, that all Christians are so far perfect as to be free from actual sin. This, however, has been shown to be a state of very great sin, inasmuch as nothing but the want of "man's good leave" prevents God from advancing all, and at once, to a much higher state. We have it contended, 2. That by the fall of our first parents, man was rendered incapable of Adamic perfection, and being incapacitated for that attainment, it is not required of him, but that the Adamic and Mosaic laws have been brought down to his fallen capacity, so that he may, and often does attain, long before he dies, to Adamic holiness of heart, though not to Adamic clearness of intellect. Here, however, they maintain first, that this attainment is not made by Christians generally, until a little "before the article of death." And yet, secondly, that it is essential to piety, so that he who has not attained it, is not pious. Or, as Mr. Wesley expresses it, "All faith that is, that ever was, or ever can be, separate from tender benevolence to every child of man, friend or foe, Christian, Jew, Heretic, or Pagan; separate from gentleness to all men; separate from resignation in all events, and contentedness in all conditions, is not the faith of a Christian, and will stand us in no stead before the face of God;" "that let us have ever so much faith, and be our faith ever so strong, it will never save us from hell, unless it now save us from all unholy tempers; from pride, passion, impatience; from all arrogance of spirit, all haughtiness, and overbearing; from wrath, anger; from discontent, murmuring, fretfulness, peevishness."*

In reply to this, we have shown it to be admitted, that "the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ for their actual transgressions;" that "the best of men need Christ as their priest, their

* Sermon on Charity.

atonement, their advocate with the Father, on account of their coming short of the law of love, for every man does so."

It is maintained, thirdly, that there can be no piety short of Adamic perfection; and fourthly, that by the fall of man his capacity has been so enlarged, and his opportunities so improved, that in this life he may attain to supra-angelic holiness. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the student of polemic theology finds it difficult to ascertain the sentiments of Arminians in reference to the question under review. The distinct and regular opinions in which they agree, are four, which, with the subdivisions, amount to seven. About as many opinions, surely, as any Church can maintain on any question.

But, again, if it be true, as is contended, that the law has been lowered, and if it be true, that man has reason "to bless God for having permitted the fall of man," "he having gained thereby a *capacity* and an opportunity of attaining *far more holiness* and happiness on earth than it would have been possible for him otherwise to attain," then we have the absurdity of a law lowered to meet the wants of an enlarged capacity.

Finally, if, as it is maintained, God, in mercy to mankind, has abolished that rigorous law under which we were originally, and has introduced a new and milder law, which, in compliance with our weaknesses since the fall, requires no more than imperfect sincere obedience, then it follows,

1. That we are not obligated by the requirements and prohibitions of the original law. And,

2. That nothing we do or omit, is a violation of that law. For if we are not under it, we are not obligated by it, and so, in the nature of the case, cannot transgress it. But, if this be true, and if it can be shown that we are under a law of love only, then it follows that there is no penalty attached to any

transgression, nor is there any law under which any one can be sent to hell, or punished even. Of course, then, punishment, that great barrier to sin, has been taken away. But, if this has been taken away by the interposition of Christ, then Christ becomes the minister of sin. But this is Antinomianism. "Antinomians," says the Rev. R. Watson, "are those who maintain that the law is of no use under the gospel, or who hold doctrines that clearly supersede the necessity of a virtuous life."* Here, then, we have the sheerest Antinomianism in the Methodist Church. Whether the demoralizing tendency stated by Mr. Watson, has followed it there, can be judged of by the account of the state of morals in that Church, as given by Methodists themselves.† A "check," therefore, to this Antinomianism, is loudly called for. This brings up the Calvinistic or scriptural view of the doctrine under consideration.

Calvinists think there never was an adult, rational human being since the fall, who, at the close of any day, could come to the honest conclusion, that his thoughts and words, and acts throughout the day, had been, in all respects, just as they ought to have been, and might have been; and that he had so fully discharged his whole duty, in all things, as he ought to have done, and might have done; that he had no omissions to deplore nor transgressions for which to ask forgiveness. They think further, that the corruption which remains in the best of men while they live, taints all they do. With the great Calvin, they "strenuously insist that there never was an action performed by a pious man, which, if examined by the scrutinizing eye of divine justice, would not deserve condemnation."‡ The conclusion to which a very careful examination has brought them, is that, "As

* Theological Dictionary, term *Antinomian*. † See Chap. xii.
‡ Institutes, Book III. Chap. xi.

there is no man that sinneth not," 1 Kings viii. 46, "there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not," Eccl. vii. 20. And therefore, that "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," 1 John i. 8. Hence, in answer to the question, "Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?" they say, "No mere man since the fall, is able, in this life, perectly to keep the commandments of God; but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed."*

Strange as it may appear, this too is one of the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Speaking of good works, the General Conference say, "Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, &c."†

Here, then, we are told by the highest authority in the Church, that our "good works cannot endure the severity of God's judgments." This is Calvinism.

"We suppose," says the Rev. N. L. Bangs, "that in consequence of our apostacy, the fatal effects of which are more or less felt by the best of men while they live, no man, in the present life, perfectly fulfils the precepts of the law, for if he did, he would no longer need the atoning merits of Christ." This, too, is Calvinism.

As to the idea that the law has been brought down to man's fallen capacity, if this be so, we ask how does it happen that we have the capacity of man so enlarged that he can attain to supra-angelic holiness?

If, again, "Christ is the end of the Adamic as well as of the Mosaic law," so that "no man living is bound to observe the Adamic more than the Mosaic law," how does it happen that Arminians quote the

* Shorter Catechism, Question 82.

† Articles and Discipline of the M. E. Church. Article X.

precepts of the Old Testament, as if they were binding?

That the ceremonial laws are not binding, we learn,

1. From expressed declarations of Scripture. See Col. ii. 14–17; Eph. ii. 15, 16.

2. From the fact, that although they are often quoted and referred to by the writers of the New Testament, they are never quoted or referred to as obligatory after the death of Christ.

That there has been no lowering of the moral law, we infer,

1. From the fact that the teachings of the Old Testament are constantly quoted in the New Testament as obligatory. Every one of the ten commandments is so quoted, or referred to.

2. From express declarations of Scripture. Thus says our Saviour, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." Matt. v. 17. "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail." Luke xvi. 17. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. v. 19. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. vii. 12. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. xxii. 37—40; xix. 16; Rom. xiii. 8—10.

Here, then, we are expressly told, not only that the old law is still in force, but that upon "the law

of love, hang all the law and the prophets."* It is true that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us." Gal. iii. 13. But it no more follows, that we are thereby released from future obedience to the law, than that a pardon releases a criminal from future obedience to the laws of the land.

3. From the teachings of the Arminians themselves. Mr. Wesley, in a brief notice of Luther's comment on the Epistle to the Galatians, says: "How blasphemously does he speak of the law of God, constantly coupling the law with sin, death, hell, or the devil. Whereas, it can no more be proved by Scripture, that Christ delivers us from the law of God, than that he delivers us from holiness, or from heaven. Here, I apprehend, is the real spring of the grand error of the Moravians. They follow Luther for better, for worse. Hence their 'No works, no law, no commandment.' But who art thou that speakest evil of the law, and judgest the law?"†

The General Conference says, "The moral law, having for its basis the moral perfections of the Divine Being, is *eternal*, not only in its duration, but also in its *obligations*. Hence, it has a commanding power and authority over the human race, even while in a natural state. Its demands are strict and severe, yet equitable. It requires perfect and perpetual obedience in thought, word, and deed, and *never relaxes in its requisitions, so as to make allowance for infirmities or mistakes.* Its denunciations are terrible, pronouncing those accursed, who in the least degree disobey its absolute commands, and dooming them to death and everlasting destruction. But all mankind have broken this law. 'For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;' therefore, they are

* See also Rom. iii. 19, 31; vi. 15; xiii. 8, 9; 1 John ii. 3.
† Watson's Life of Wesley, page 208.

unavoidably exposed to its dreadful threatenings, and all the curses it pronounces are suspended over their guilty heads."*

Rev. R. Watson says, "All are born under the whole malediction" of the Adamic law. But how can this be possible, if that law is either lowered or abrogated?

Again, he says, "The law under which all moral agents are placed, there is reason to believe, is substantially, and in its great principles, the same, and is included in this epitome, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself'—for though this is spoken to men, yet as it is founded in both its parts, upon the natural relation of every intelligent creature to God, and to all other intelligent creatures, it may be presumed to be universal." "Its comprehensiveness is another presumption of its universality; for unquestionably, it is a maxim of universal import, that 'love is the fulfilling of the law,' since he who loves must choose to be obedient to every command issued by the sovereign, or the Father beloved; and when this love is supreme and uniform the obedience must be absolute and unceasing. . . . . Indeed, if rational beings are under a law at all, it cannot be conceived that less than this could be required by the good and holy being the Creator. . . From these views it follows that *all particular precepts*, whether they relate to God or to other rational creatures, arise out of one or other of these two 'great' and comprehending 'commandments;' and that *every particular law* supposes the general one. For in the Decalogue and the writings of the prophets, are many particular precepts, though in neither are these two great commandments expressly recorded.

* Germs of Thought, page 102.

And yet, our Saviour has told us, that 'on these two commandments *hang* all the law and the prophets.' "*

"Christ," says the General Conference, "has adopted every point of the moral law, and engrafted it into the law of love."†

So, then, after a long voyage, we have got back to the Bible, and to Calvinism, from which we most grievously departed.

Having quoted several times the Arminian rule on the subject of marriage, we will make a few remarks in reference to it.

According to that rule, it is a sin for a pious person to marry one who is not pious, or at least seeking to be so. The Apostle Paul, addressing believers, says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." 2 Cor. vi. 14. For this prohibition he assigns the reason, by asking, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousnes? What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" Ibid. verse 15. Now as a pious Israelite was not prohibited from marrying an Israelite who was not pious, though he was forbidden to marry an idolater, we think Paul did not intend to teach that a pious person may not marry one who is moral, and externally a believer, though not pious. For although there are very many, who have not been "born of the Spirit," and consequently are not united to Christ by a living faith, yet of these very many are far from being infidels. The expressions "righteousness," "light," "Christ," and "believer," contrasted with "unrighteousness," "darkness," "Belial," and "infidel," show plainly to what class of unbelievers Paul refers. Hence we say in our Confession of

* Theological Institutes, Part II. Chap. xviii.
† Doctrinal Tracts, page 356.

Faith, Chap. xiv. Sec. 3, "Such as profess the reformed religion should not marry with infidels, papists, or other idolaters. Neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresies." If this is not the proper interpretation of the word of God, then,

1. The teaching of the New Testament is, in reference to this particular, different from that of the Old Testament.

2. Believers, in some places, could not marry at all, without violating the command of God.

3. A large number of the members of the Methodist Church are fallen from grace.

There is another subject also, already somewhat dwelt upon, about which we will make one or two remarks before we close. It is in reference to Christians "resolving that none of their happiness shall consist in eating and drinking, or in any pleasures of sense;" "admitting no desire of pleasing food or any other pleasure of sense; no desire of pleasing the eye, or the imagination, by anything grand, or new, or beautiful; no desire of money, of praise, or esteem, or of happiness in any creature." We remark,

1. If it be a sin to do these things, then "Methodists are no better than other people."

2. Since God has given us our senses, and "giveth us richly all things to enjoy," 1 Tim. vi. 17, and prescribed the limits of our enjoyment, 1 Cor. vii. 31, "there is nothing better than that every man should enjoy the good of all his labour, for it is the gift of God." Eccl ii. 24; iii. 13; v. 18, 19.

We have now gone somewhat hastily over the points of difference between Calvinists and Arminians, and in reference to the whole will make two quotations. The first is from an article written by the late Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., which may be found in

the *Calvinistic Magazine*, No. 7, Vol. I, and entitled, "Mole-hills and Mountains, or the Difficulties of Calvinism and Arminianism compared."

"You will, perhaps, ask, are there no *difficulties* to be encountered in embracing that system of evangelical truth, which is usually styled *Calvinism?* It ought not to be disguised, that there *are* in this system real difficulties, which, probably, no human wisdom will ever be able to solve. But are the difficulties which belong to the system of *Arminianism* either *fewer* in number, or *less* in magnitude? Instead of this, they are more numerous, and more serious; more contradictory to reason, more inconsistent with the character of God, and more directly opposed both to the letter and spirit of his word. I rest in the *Calvinistic* system, with a confidence daily increasing, not only because the more I examine it, the more clearly it appears to me to be taught in the Holy Scriptures; but also because the more frequently and the more carefully I compare the amount of the difficulties, on both sides, the more heavily they seem to me to press against the *Arminian* doctrine.

"It is easy and popular to object, that *Calvinism* has a tendency to cut the nerves of all spiritual exertion; that, if we are *elected*, there is no need of exertion; and if *not* elected, it will be in *vain*. But this objection lies with quite as much force against the *Arminian* hypothesis. An *Arminian* who finds fault with the doctrine of predestination, as making out God the author of sin, unjust, tyrannical, &c., how shall he reconcile or clear the difficulties in his own way, namely, to believe, as he must, that the Deity has created millions of human beings *knowing*, with *certainty*, before he brought them into existence, that they would prove incorrigible sinners, incur his divine displeasure, and that he in consequence should consign them to eternal punishment in the region of misery and woe? All *Arminians*, though they re-

ject the doctrine of *election*, explicitly grant that while *some* will, in fact, be saved, *others* will, in fact, as certainly perish. Now it is perfectly plain, that this position is just as liable to the abuse above stated, as the *Calvinistic* doctrine. . . . . .

"If I could admit the dreadful thought, that the Christian's continuance in his journey heavenwards, depends, not on the immutable *love* and *promise* of his God, but on the firmness of his own strength, and the stability of his own resolutions; and of course that he who is the most eminent saint to-day, may become a child of wrath, and an heir of perdition to-morrow; in short, if I could conceive of God as working without any providential design, and willing without any certain effect; desiring to save man, yet unable to save him, and often disappointed in his expectations, *doing* as much, and *designing* as much for those that perish, as for those that are saved; but after all baffled in his wishes concerning them; hoping and desiring great things, but *certain of nothing*, because he had *determined on nothing;* if I could believe *these things*, then, indeed, I should renounce *Calvinism*, but it would not be to embrace the system of *Arminianism*. Alas! it would be impossible to stop here. I must consider the *character* of God as dishonoured; his *counsels* as degraded to a chaos of wishes and endeavours; his promises as the fallible and uncertain declarations of circumscribed knowledge and endless doubt; the best hopes of the Christian as liable every hour to be blasted; and the whole plan of salvation as nothing better than a gloomy system of possibilities and peradventures, a system on the whole, nearly, if not quite, as likely to land the believer in the abyss of the damned, as in the paradise of God."

Our second quotation is from the sermon of Dr. Humphrey, at the opening of the Old-school General Assembly, in 1852.

"It may be thought that the Arminian divinity, as

preached by John Wesley, has developed a type of Christianity no less diffusive than our own. Now while we may not conceal the profound conviction that our own theology, even when it differs from Wesley's, is the theology of the Bible, yet we would do all homage to the vital truths which that great man adopted, into his system of faith, and to the zeal and success with which he and his disciples have proclaimed them. But the progress of this system raises several questions of immense importance. One of these respects the peculiar type of piety which it developes. On that question I do not propose to enter. Another question touches the elements of its power. It might be clearly shown, as I humbly conceive, that its past success is to be referred not to those doctrines which are peculiar to itself, but to those which are common to both theologies; not to its denials respecting election, efficacious grace and perseverance; but to its utterance concerning original sin, justification and regeneration.

"A third inquiry relates to the continued and future efficiency of modern Arminianism. Is it a permanent redeeming power on earth? On this part of the case, I take leave, without intending anything disrespectful towards brethren of other persuasions, to make a few suggestions.

"It is now only a few years over a century since Wesley began his career. A religious system matures slowly. The truths asserted may, for a long period, hold in check the serious errors with which they are combined. The errors, if not eliminated, will at last work out the dissolution of the system. It may indeed outlast many generations, but what are even ages to the life of a true permanent theology?

"It is to be remembered, also, that the Arminian scheme has yet to be reduced to a systematic and logical form. Where are its written formularies pushing boldly forth, to their final and inevitable con-

clusions, all its doctrines touching predestination, free will and efficacious grace? We have its brief and informal creed in some five and twenty articles; but where is its complete confession of faith in thirty or forty chapters? Where is its whole body of divinity from under the hand of a master, sharply defining its terms, accurately stating its belief, laying down the conclusions logically involved therein, trying these conclusions no less than their premises by the word of God, refuting objections, and adjusting all its parts into a consistent and systematic whole? It has furnished us indeed with some detached negations and philosophical theories.

"We have, for example, its flat denial of our doctrine of predestination; but has it to this day met for itself, the problem of foreknowledge infinite by a more plausible solution than the celebrated sophism, that although God has the capacity of foreknowing all things, he chooses to foreknow only some things? We have also, its notion of the free will, wherein there was supposed to be the germ of a systematic Arminianism; but this budding promise was long since nipped by the untimely frost of Jonathan Edwards's logic. It is clear that an exposition of this theology which shall satisfy logical consciousness is indispensable to its perpetuity: otherwise it cannot take possession of educated and disciplined minds—educated by the word and Spirit of God, and disciplined to exact analysis and argument: otherwise, although it may exert a temporary influence, it will retire before advancing spiritual and intellectual culture. It is also clear that the first century of its existence has not produced that exposition. Another century may clearly demonstrate that such a production is impossible, by showing that the logical and scriptural element is not in the Arminian system; that the law of affinity and crystallization is wanting to its disjointed principles; that this theology, combining

many precious truths and many capital errors, resembles a mingled mass of diamonds and fragments of broken glass and pottery, which no plastic skill of man, or power of fire, can mould into one, transparent, unclouded, many sided, equal sided crystal, its angles all beaming, and its points all burning with light—a Kohinoor indeed!"

The reader who may desire to see the opinion of one of the most distinguished writers of the present age, in reference to the rapid spread, and permanency of Arminian Methodism, is referred to "Wesley and Methodism," by Isaac Taylor, pp. 194—197.

CHAPTER XIX.

WESLEY'S CONVERSION TO ARMINIANISM.

THE reader of these chapters has no doubt been surprised at seeing the amount of Calvinism we have extracted from the writings of Mr. Wesley. The remark of Isaac Taylor is undoubtedly correct, viz. "Everything for which a Calvinist, not of a fanatical temper, would contend, is embraced within the compass of Wesley's own preaching language, and might indubitably be thence inferred."* How then, it may be asked, are we to account for the fact, that he was so distinguished and zealous an Arminian? I will state the only reason I have ever seen assigned, together with some reasons which seem to show its probable correctness.

Mr. Wesley appears to have been in the habit, through the greater part of his ministerial life, of determining matters of doubt by several kinds of lottery. This was, 1. By Bibliomancy, or consulting

* Wesley and Methodism, page 52.

the Bible. His plan (if I understood it) was, to open the Bible at random, and then determine the question at issue, by the first passage that met his eye. "The manner in which some persons were tormented," says Southey, "perplexed him for a time, and gave him some concern. He suspected craziness, when imposture might have explained the sympathies. But having recourse to Bibliomancy, to know what would be the issue of these things, he was satisfied by lighting upon a text which certainly was never more unworthily applied." "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke ii. 14. Thus deluding himself, when he was sent for to one of these women, he prayed God to bruise Satan under her feet, and the patient immediately cried out, "He is gone, he is gone." And so of several other cases in the same connection.

"Of one of these he says, although sent for, he was unwilling, indeed, afraid to go, thinking it would not avail unless some who were strong in the faith would wrestle with God for her. I opened my New Testament on these words, 'I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth.' Matt. xxv. 25. I stood reproved, and went immediately."*

"A great sensation having been produced at Bristol, by Whitefield, Wesley was to come and keep it up. But he and his brother, instead of taking the matter into calm and rational consideration, had consulted the Bible upon the business, and stumbled upon uncomfortable texts. The first was, 'And some of them would have taken him, but no man laid hands on him,' to which they added, 'not till the time was come,' that it might correspond with the subsequent lots. Another was, 'Get thee up into this mountain, and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people.' The next trial confirmed

* Southey's Life of Wesley, pp. 147, 148.

the impression which these had made. 'And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab, thirty days.' These verses were sufficiently ominous, but worse remained behind. 'I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.' And pushing the trial still further, they opened upon the burial of Stephen. 'Whether,' says Wesley in his journal, 'this was permitted, only for the trial of our faith, God knoweth, and the event will show.' These unpropitious texts rendered him by no means desirous of undertaking the journey, yet he appealed again to the sacred oracles, and says his journal, received an answer, as if spoken to himself, and answered not again. 'Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, and yet shalt thou not mourn, nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.' The brothers were disposed to let the matter rest, but the members of the society continued to dispute about it, until to settle the dispute they resorted to a lot. The lot decided that Wesley should go. This being decided, they opened the Bible concerning the issue, but the passage, 'when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require the blood at your hands, and take you away from the earth?' being still unfavourable, they tried again. This was, 'Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem.' This was decisive. 'We dissuaded my brother,' says Charles Wesley, 'from going to Bristol, from an unaccountable fear, that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly to whatsoever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out, recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him. I desired to die with him."*

From this we learn, first, that although Mr.

* Southey's Life of Wesley, Vol. I. page 148.

Wesley professed implicit confidence in the lot, yet, like Balaam, when he could not get what he desired by one experiment, he tried again. 2. That notwithstanding the lots were all one way, the result was exactly the contrary; for it does not appear that he received any molestation after he went to Bristol.

A second kind of lottery, which he practised, was to write the yea, and nay, of a question, on separate pieces of paper, put each of these in a hat or box, and settle the matter by whichever of the pieces he drew out. In Gillies's Life of Whitefield, two instances of this kind of lottery are related. The first is on pages 26 and 27, and is as follows:

"Whitefield sailed from the Downs for Georgia, a few hours only before the vessel which brought Wesley back from thence, cast anchor there. The ships passed in sight of each other. When Wesley landed, he learned that his coadjutor was on board the vessel in the offing; it was still possible to communicate with him; and Whitefield was not a little surprised at receiving a letter which contained these words: 'When I saw God, by the wind which was carrying you out, brought me in, I asked counsel of of God. His answer you have enclosed.' The enclosure was a slip of paper with this sentence. 'Let him return to London.' Wesley doubting from his own experience, whether his friend could be as usefully employed in America as in England, had referred the question to chance, in which, at that time he had great confidence, and this was the lot he had drawn."

The reader will not fail to discover that Mr. Wesley considered the lot a divine revelation. "I asked counsel of God; his answer you have enclosed," &c.

The next case related by the same author, may be found on page 58. Mr. Wesley, it seems had been charged in a private letter with "not preaching the gospel, because he did not preach the doctrine of

election. According to his usual practice at that time, instead of consulting with his friends, or even advising with himself upon the prudence of engaging in controversy, he drew a lot for his direction, and the lot was 'preach and print.' So he preached a sermon against the doctrine, and printed it."

Here the reader will not fail to discover the same implicit confidence in the lot, as a revelation from God. The sermon alluded to, is on "Free Grace." Each of these cases of lottery is succinctly related by Whitefield in a letter to Mr. Wesley, contained in the same book, pp. 627, 628. This letter is a review of that sermon. Mr. Whitefield says, "Before I enter upon the discourse itself, give me leave to take a little notice of what, in your preface you term an *indispensable obligation* to make it public to all the world. I must own, that I always thought you were quite mistaken upon that head. The case (you know) stands thus: When you were at Bristol, I think you received a note from a private hand, charging you with not preaching the gospel, because you did not preach up election. Upon this you drew a lot. The answer was—*preach* and *print.* I have often questioned whether in so doing you did not tempt the Lord. . . . . However this be, the lot came out—*preach* and *print;* accordingly you *preached* and *printed* against election." . . . "The morning I sailed from Deal to Gibraltar, you arrived from Georgia. Instead of giving me an opportunity to converse with you, though the ship was not far off the shore, you drew a lot, and immediately set forward to London. You left a letter behind you, in which were words to this effect: 'When I saw God, by the wind which was carrying you out, brought me in, I asked counsel of God. His answer you have enclosed.' This was a piece of paper on which were written these words: 'Let him return to London.' . . . I wrote you word that I could not return to London. We sailed immediately. Some

months after, I received a letter from you at Georgia, wherein you wrote words to this effect: 'Though God never before gave me a wrong lot, yet perhaps he suffered me to have such a lot at that time, to try what was in your heart.'"

The third and only other kind of lottery practised by Mr. Wesley, appears to have been the toss of a piece of money. This brings up the way in which it is charged upon him, that he decided to be an Arminian. Thus in a letter from the Rev. Augustus Toplady to Mr. Wesley, in 1792, we meet with the following, viz. "Why should you, of all people in the world, be so very angry with the doctrines of grace? Forget not the months and days that are past. Remember that it once depended on the toss of a shilling whether you yourself should be a Calvinist or an Arminian. Tails fell uppermost, and you resolved to be an Arminian."

Here, then, is the charge boldly made. If it has ever been denied, the writer has never met with the denial, nor has he ever heard of it. Mr. Whitehead, the biographer of Mr. Wesley, speaking of Mr. Toplady, says: "He assiduously collected anecdotes and stories to the prejudice of Mr. Wesley's character; and not only mentioned them in private, but committed them to paper, and circulated them among his friends."*

Mr. Whitehead here speaks of private charges in private letters, but although the charge which we adduce was published, Mr. Whitehead makes no allusion to it. When charged with ill treatment of his wife, his friends clear up the charge.† When charged with misquoting authors, he himself flatly denies it.‡ When charged with forgery by Mr. Toplady, he gives a carefully written evasive answer. Can any one

* Life of Wesley, page 304.
† See Watson's Life of Wesley, pp. 187, &c.
‡ See Doctrinal Tracts, page 193.

doubt, therefore, that if it had been possible to evade, or deny this charge, it would have been done?

The ground then on which the truthfulness of the charge seems to depend, is,

1. That Mr. Wesley was in the habit of settling matters of doubt by a lot.

2. That although he was charged publicly with having thus decided to be an Arminian, that charge, so far as is known, was never noticed or denied, though other charges were. It appears probable, therefore, that the charge is true. And if true, as with him a lot was considered a revelation from God, it at once accounts for the fury of his uncompromising war against Calvinism, and for the extravagance of his language, "Whatever it proves besides, no scripture can prove predestination," &c.

CHAPTER XX.

REVIEW OF FOSTER ON CALVINISM.

In this our closing chapter, we will briefly review the latest controversial production on the Arminian side. We allude to a book bearing the title of "Objections to Calvinism as it is. In a series of letters addressed to the Rev. N. L. Rice, D. D., by the Rev. R. S. Foster, with an Appendix, containing replies and rejoinders: 1850."

This is decidedly the most sophistical, heated, and unjust book we have read in this controversy; so much so, that if it had not been endorsed with unusual commendation by the organs of the Methodist Church, and circulated more freely perhaps than any Arminian publication in connection with the Calvinistic con-

troversy, it would not have merited a respectful notice. Universalism, or Infidelity downright, is just ahead of the man who can write so rashly of Deity. While perusing some of his chapters, we could hardly divest ourselves of the idea that we had got hold of the sermons of a Universalist preacher. But as we intend to be brief in our review, we will not be tedious in the introduction.

"This book," we are told, "is the creature of circumstances. It had never existed but for reasons over which the author himself had no control. . . He made a book, not with intention or forethought, but almost before he was aware of it, and without any purpose whatever." Page 13.

This is as we would suppose. The book throughout bears evidence of impulse and passion without reflection. The wonder is, that a state of excitement high enough to give birth to such matter, should have continued long enough to bring it into the form of a book. But the author continues,

"The Church, of which he is a humble and obscure minister, had been long and grievously assailed by one of the principal organs of a sister denomination—her doctrines and usages held up to public odium, as perverted by the pen of misrepresentation—her influence for piety questioned, and whatever was peculiar to her organization ridiculed and calumniated. And this ungenerous course was commenced and pursued by an accredited champion, at a time when peace and Christian union had long existed—against remonstrances on our part, and published deprecations of the consequences which were certain to ensúe."

Of what was published by Dr. Rice, and here referred to, we cannot speak, as we never saw it, but on some points we can.

In a letter from Dr. Rice, dated October 2d, 1854, he informs us, that he settled in Cincinnati in 1844; that in 1846, he became a joint editor of the *Presby-*

terian of the West, then under the management of the Sessions of the Old-school Presbyterian Churches of that city; and about two years afterwards the sole editor; that in 1848, there appeared an editorial article on "Church Membership" in the *Western Christian Advocate*, an organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church, containing incorrect and offensive statements concerning the Presbyterian Church. "This," says Dr. Rice, "called forth a series of articles on Methodism from a correspondent. Out of this article, together with another on the same subject, grew my controversy with Dr. Simpson, in which, so far as my articles are concerned, there was not a word that could give offence to any reasonable Methodist."

We leave the reader to make his own comments.

Mr. Foster says again, this was done "at a time when peace and Christian union had long existed," &c.

About the time Dr. Rice removed to Cincinnati, the Bishop Andrew difficulty commenced in the Methodist Church, and during that storm, the assaults on Calvinism which commenced with the origin of Methodism in this country, were considerably abated both in the pulpit and newspapers. This is the "peace and Christian union that had *long* existed." Let any one examine a file of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, for any year previous to that event, and he will find that neither Popery, Infidelity, Unitarianism, Universalism, nor all combined, received as much attention as Calvinism alone; and this is true of the Methodist pulpit also. But although there was an abatement of hostilities in the pulpit and newspapers, there was no abatement in the issue and circulation of such tracts as "Duplicity Exposed," "Predestination calmly considered," "Serious considerations on Absolute Predestination," "Serious considerations on the Doctrines of Election and Reprobation," "Free Grace," "The Consequences Proved,"

"A Blow at the Root," "A Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend," "Thoughts on Imputed Righteousness," Serious Thoughts on the Perseverance of the Saints," &c. If then Dr. Rice did make an assault, it was upon an armed enemy in the field, and doing all he could.

But farther, as to "peace and Christian union," this we think, such as it has been, is likely to continue for some time. Within our recollection, not a little of the stentorian artillery of the Methodist pulpit was directed against "College learning," and theological preparation for the ministry. Very much of what we heard on these subjects in our young days, we of course have forgotten. One sentence, however, we remember. It was from the first Methodist preacher we ever heard, and ran thus, viz.

> "The sermon of a learned man, is like powder without ball,
> Just a flash and that is all."

Now, as the juvenile patriarchs and young striplings of the present day are creating such a stir in favour of Academies, Colleges, and Theological Seminaries, we cannot suppose the "old fogies," one of whom we heard call colleges "dens of vipers," are going to permit the innovation without a struggle. Calvinists may therefore expect this peace to be prolonged. But it is time to return from this digression. Mr. Foster tells us, that "this ungenerous course" of Dr. Rice "was pursued against remonstrances on our part, and published deprecations of the consequences."

"Published deprecations of the consequences,"—that is, the production of this book. "*Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus*"—The mountains are in labour, (and) a puny mouse is born.

He continues, "The object of the author has not been to discuss fully the doctrines peculiar to Calvinism—not to present the counter view of Arminianism—nothing of the kind: it was simply to

present a statement of Calvinism, and objections thereto." Page 14.

Here Mr. Foster takes infidel ground. Infidels tell us the Bible is not true, but do not tell us what is. They aim to put out the light we have, but give us nothing in its place. It is worthy of remark, also, that notwithstanding Calvinists appeal constantly to the Scriptures in support of their peculiar views, Mr. Foster takes up a third of his book in an effort to refute what *he* alleges to be their view of the doctrine of election and of the divine decrees, without a single quotation from the Bible. On page seventeen he tells us, it is true, "that it could have been shown, as it has been triumphantly many times, confining the argument to the Scripture limits, that Calvinism is not taught therein, and that an opposite system is;" but as the reader of this work has seen something of the torturing and twisting and lopping and splicing the word of God has received, in making out these triumphant exhibitions, he will not be greatly scared at the declaration.

"Our main object," he continues, "was to show that consequences so revolting, inevitably result from it, as to prove him guilty of blasphemy who charges it upon the word of God; or rather to make it impossible for any one to believe anything so dreadful."

Here our author takes Universalist ground. The "object" of the Universalist is "to show that consequences so revolting, inevitably result from" the idea that a merciful God will punish any of his creatures for ever "as prove him guilty of blasphemy who charges it upon the word of God," and hence the numerous passages that do most explicitly teach that he will so punish them, are tortured to make them teach something else.

But let us hear what Mr. Foster says of these same blasphemers. "Toward the Presbyterian Church I

have cherished sentiments of the profoundest attachment from my boyhood. These sentiments have grown up with me to manhood—they remain to this hour, despite of her errors. I here record my firm persuasion that she has many surpassing excellencies —many which my own Church may well and wisely emulate." Pages 15, 16.

According to Mr. Foster, therefore, "blasphemy" has, in many respects, a much better effect than truth.

He continues, "It is assumed that what is logically false cannot be scripturally true; and therefore, that by involving Calvinism in logical dilemmas it is overthrown and proved to be unscriptural, as the Scriptures cannot teach what is logically untrue, or teaching it, it teaches what is false and contradictory. . . . Whoever, therefore, derives a system from the Bible which is false, and demonstrably so to human reason, by the process of conclusive logic, either derives from the Bible what it does not authorize, or he proves it false; in other words, he is mistaken, or the Bible is not true." Page 17

Here Mr. Foster takes Unitarian ground. Unitarians "assume" that the doctrine of the Trinity is logically and mathematically absurd, and therefore, that it cannot be derived from the Bible; or being derived therefrom, the Bible is not the word of God. Trinitarians contend on the contrary, that it is taught in the Bible, and though incomprehensible to man, is neither logically nor mathematically untrue.

Here, then, is a champion for Arminianism, who, in his battles against Calvinism, thinks he gains great advantage by occupying the ground of infidels, Universalists, and Unitarians, the systems of every one of which he admits to be false. Does the defence of truth require this? In reference to the Unitarian ground, it may not be amiss to remark that he follows in the footsteps of an illustrious predecessor.

As to Calvinism being logically false, the great and

good Robert Hall of England, has said, "If any man says he is an Arminian, the inference is, he is not a good logician."* It is to be remembered, however, that the shadow of Mr. Foster, in Mr. Foster's estimation, hides all such men as Robert Hall in impenetrable darkness.

But to return: "The object of the author has not been to present the counterview of Arminianism." O no! "nothing of the kind." "*Hic labor, hoc opus est.*" This is labour, this is work. Having tried our hand, we know what it is. In the Appendix, Mr. Foster vauntingly tells us, Dr. Rice would not take up the gauntlet he, Mr. F., had thrown down. Sometimes an animal that is very courageous when there is a fence between him and his antagonist, becomes very peaceful when a gap is opened. Any one acquainted with the "Campbell-killer" knows, that in theological warfare he is a man of chivalry; but no man of sense, however chivalrous, would go out into the open plain, merely to receive the fire of an antagonist who shoots from behind a tree. The impartial pursuit of truth is not compatible with an examination of one side only, of a disputed question. Accordingly Dr. Rice, in one of the *brief* notices he takes of Mr. Foster's performance, says: "There is another great defect in these letters. The real points of difference between Methodists and Presbyterians are not stated." "The very first thing necessary to a satisfactory discussion of this subject, is a clear statement of the difference between the faith of Methodists and Presbyterians."†

Added to this, Dr. Rice, in addition to his editorial and pastoral duties, was engaged in a controversy with "Dr. Simpson," one of Mr. Foster's brethren.‡

But notwithstanding all this, Mr. Foster at this

* Works, Vol. III. page 35. † Appendix, page 248.
‡ Appendix, page 268.

juncture fired at him from behind a tree, and then exulted that the doctor declined a contest. Courageous man! your valour is equal to your ability, and that, in your estimation, surpasses anything we have words to express.

On page nineteen he says, "The reference made to authors in quotation, has, in every instance, with a few exceptions, been taken by the writer himself directly from them, and to those who cannot examine for themselves, he insures their correctness. Those charged to Piscator and Twisse, are taken from Mr. Wesley, but their correctness is not questioned."*

But the "correctness of the quotations charged by Mr. Wesley upon Piscator, and Twisse," and several others here adduced, is questioned. It was questioned then, and it is questioned now. Mr. Wesley, referring to these very quotations, says, in his "Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend," "to all predestinarians," "I am informed some of you have said that the following quotations are false; that these words were not spoken by these authors; others, that they were not spoken in this sense; and others, that neither you yourself, nor any true predestinarian ever did, or ever would speak so."†

Added to this, Dr. Rice says, "It is easy for one who takes up a doctrine without understanding it, to make quotations from writers, so partial, or so completely severed from explanations and qualifications given, as entirely to misrepresent them. This Mr. Foster has done—we do not say intentionally."‡

Added to this, any one who will take the trouble of reading the appendix to "Annan's difficulties of Arminian Methodism," where their falsity is shown, will be astonished that they should ever be appealed to as authority. (Of course, we do not refer to those

* Appendix, page 268. † Doctrinal Tracts, page 193.
‡ Appendix, pp. 269, 270.

"taken by the writer himself directly from authors.") Added to this, a number of the writers referred to were Episcopalians, in the same communion with Mr. Wesley, and yet their writings are quoted by Mr. Foster against the Presbyterians.

But again, in quoting authorities, in controversy especially, it is usual to give the name of the book, the volume, and page or chapter, so that all concerned may be able to examine for themselves. We will here give two examples of the way in which Mr. Foster gives no inconsiderable number of the quotations in his book—they may be found on page 37, and are as follows, viz. "Neither does God only excite and predestinate the will of men to vicious actions, so far as they are actions, *but he likewise so excites it, that it is not possible, but thus acted upon, it shall act.*"*

"Moreover, as a second cause cannot act, unless acted upon, and previously moved to act, by the predetermining influence of the first, so, in like manner, that influence of the first cause is so efficacious, as that, supposing it, the second cause cannot but act."†

Now, as Mr. Foster "insures" the correctness of his quotations, we must not call them in question. But Witsius wrote extensively. His principal works are contained in five considerable volumes. His other works are, "The Economy of the Covenants," "Dissertations on the Apostles' Creed," "Egyptiaca, et Decaphylon," "Canon Chronicus," "De Legibus Hebræorum."

Here then, is a controversialist insuring the correctness of his quotations, yet does not tell in which volume or chapter, or on what page of ten volumes his quotations may be found. In short, he omits everything by which they may be found, except the name of the reputed author. The reader who, like

* Witsius. † Witsius.

ourselves, has seen the way in which Arminians have quoted Calvinistic authorities, would be glad of an opportunity to examine such quotations as are here given, but, alas! they "are hid from our eyes."

The "objections" Mr. Foster urges, are nearly all such as have been already considered; we will therefore pass them over.

The "Introduction" to the book under review, was written by a Mr. Simpson. In it we meet with the following, viz. "In the days of Wesley a strong effort was made to suppress Arminian views. . . . . But though the spirit of the Synod of Dort was aroused, the civil power to punish could not be employed. Mr. Wesley continued to preach, and Mr. Fletcher in his defence, issued those masterly Checks which displayed at once his superior genius, and the strength of the cause which he had espoused." Page 9.

In reference to these "masterly Checks" of Mr. Fletcher, "which displayed at once his superior genius, and the strength of the cause he had espoused," it may be well to hear Mr. Fletcher himself. Writing to Mr. Wesley in 1776, he says: "What has made me glut our friends with my books, is not a love to such publications, but a desire to make an end of the controversy. It is probable my design has miscarried; and that I have disgusted rather than convinced the people."*

If, then, these Checks were so little esteemed, on their first appearance, that they "disgusted rather than convinced the people," and are so little valued now, that they are among the very rare books to be met with in the library of a Methodist preacher, they do not appear to have been considered so "masterly" after all.

That we may be able to understand the state of things alluded to, it is proper to remark, that some

* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 223.

time after Methodist societies were formed in England, they were in many respects strongly Calvinistic: and the Minutes of the Conferences had a strong savour of Calvinism. But when Arminianism began to prevail, it led to the modification of the minutes.*

In the minutes of the Conference of 1770, we find the following, viz. "We said in 1744, 'we have leaned too much toward Calvinism. Wherein,'" &c. They then go on to modify.†

Now, this modification of the minutes brought on an explosion between the Calvinists and the Arminians, which explosion finally brought out Mr. Fletcher on the Arminian side. Mr. Whitehead, in referring to the changes by the Conference, says, "It appears to me that the propositions as they stand in the minutes in short sentences, without explanation, have a very suspicious appearance. The expressions are too ambiguous, and might easily have been exchanged for others more clear, and less liable to give offence. I cannot, therefore, commend either the wisdom or the prudence that dictated them, notwithstanding the abilities of a Fletcher could make them speak clearly and explicitly, the language of *free grace*."‡

The reader who may desire to see a full account of what followed the modification referred to, (and which is anything but to the credit of Mr. Wesley) is referred to the "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," Vol. II. Chap. xxxix.

Finally, strange as it may appear, Mr. Foster pays to Calvinism a high compliment. "Whatever else may be said of Calvinism," says he, "it must be admitted that it is a complete system. If their view of election is true, this (the final perseverance of the saints) is consequently true. If their doctrine of the

* See Whitehead's Life of Wesley, page 193. † Ibid. page 210.
‡ Life of Wesley, page 216.

atonement is true, this cannot be false. If their doctrine of effectual grace is true, this must follow."*

Here, then, is admitted, by a most uncompromising Arminian, what every Calvinist believes, viz. that "Calvinism is a *complete* system." Just at this point, however, we find ourselves in a dilemma. We cannot return the compliment. For "whatever else may be said of" Arminianism, it is not a system.

But we are done. If our labours shall result in clearing up difficulties, connected with controverted questions—in removing erroneous impressions in reference to revealed truth, and thus tend to confirm the faith of the people of God, the great object we have had in view, will be attained. For this end we submit our book to the public and to the superintending care of a gracious Providence.

* Objections to Calvinism, pp. 174, 178.

THE END.

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